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THESIS

MESSAGE IN A BATTLE: AN ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION SINCE 9/11

by

Jacqueline Maguire

March 2013

Thesis Co-Advisors: Robert Josefek
Anders Strindberg

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The use of public diplomacy is an essential component of counterterrorism efforts but, to date, the United States has not been as effective in its attempts to utilize strategic communication against the threat of violent Islamic extremism as it has been in its utilization of military, intelligence, and law enforcement resources. Based upon the idea that a retrospective analysis of previous presidential speeches could provide guidance for future strategic communications of U.S. government officials, this thesis identifies the nature of the message delivered by U.S. Presidents to foreign audiences since the 9/11 attacks through a qualitative analysis of a purposeful sampling of 50 speeches and statements. The analysis examines the position of the United States government in the ideological debate with violent Islamic extremists to determine whether the United States has taken a largely defensive stance, in which the United States constantly strives to counter the narrative of violent extremist adversaries, or a more forward-leaning posture, in which the United States remains primarily concerned with presenting its own narrative based on its values and ideals. The results of this analysis are then utilized to offer recommendations on modifying the message to better support U.S. efforts to combat violent Islamic extremism.

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MESSAGE IN A BATTLE: AN ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION SINCE 9/11

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ABSTRACT

The use of public diplomacy is an essential component of counterterrorism efforts but, to date, the United States has not been as effective in its attempts to utilize strategic communication against the threat of violent Islamic extremism as it has been in its utilization of military, intelligence, and law enforcement resources. Based upon the idea that a retrospective analysis of previous presidential speeches could provide guidance for future strategic communications of U.S. government officials, this thesis identifies the nature of the message delivered by U.S. presidents to foreign audiences since the 9/11 attacks through a qualitative analysis of a purposeful sampling of 50 speeches and statements. The analysis examines the position of the United States government in the ideological debate with violent Islamic extremists to determine whether the United States has taken a largely defensive stance, in which the United States constantly strives to counter the narrative of violent extremist adversaries, or a more forward-leaning posture, in which the United States remains primarily concerned with presenting its own narrative based on its values and ideals. The results of this analysis are then utilized to offer recommendations on modifying the message to better support U.S. efforts to combat violent Islamic extremism.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States has engaged in extensive military, intelligence, and law enforcement action against the terrorist threat in the global arena. These primarily tactical and reactive efforts of defense, detection, and deterrence have contributed to the protection of the country and its interests, but have not fully confronted the ideological foundation on which the threat is based. This thesis continued the increased focus on public diplomacy as a vital tool in the counterterrorism efforts of the United States through a qualitative analysis of speeches given by sitting U.S. Presidents to foreign audiences. Through this analysis, the position of the United States Government in the ideological conversation was examined to determine whether the United States has taken a largely defensive stance, in which the United States constantly strives to counter the narrative of violent extremist adversaries, or a more forward-leaning posture, in which the United States remains primarily concerned with presenting its own narrative based on its values and ideals.

The qualitative analysis was conducted on a purposeful sampling of 50 speeches and statements given by Presidents Bush and Obama to foreign audiences in the years since 9/11. The examination of themes and patterns in the words and phrases used by the presidents identified the nature of the message delivered by the presidents, differences in the nature of the message between presidential administrations, and how this message can be modified to best support the U.S. in its efforts to combat violent Islamic extremism.

Each speech was evaluated and relevant excerpts were determined to be either a reactive counter narrative in response to the messages of violent Islamic extremists or a proactive narrative based on the views of the United States. One of four codes was then applied to each excerpt as appropriate: for counter narrative messages, either *Countering Perceptions* or *Undermining Adversarial Leadership*; for narrative messages, either *Positive Vision Based on America's* Values or *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United* States. The analysis calculated the number of occurrences of each code in the speeches and statements, as well as the relative weight given to each code within each speech. An Intensity Index, based on a scale of 0 to 1.0, was utilized to demonstrate

this relative weight and was calculated by dividing the number of instances of each code by the total number of coded excerpts within the speech.

Based on the review of speeches and statements as well as the analysis of the frequency and relative weight afforded to each code, the research determined the message delivered by the presidents to foreign audiences since the 9/11 terrorist attacks to be of a primarily narrative nature. Less than half of all total speeches and statements contained excerpts of a counter narrative nature (either *Countering Perceptions* and *Undermining Adversarial Leadership*); rather, the majority of the remarks included at least one occurrence of a narrative message with 86% containing excerpts with the *Common Interests and Values with the United States* code and 66% containing excerpts with the *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* code. Within the speeches and statements containing these codes, the excerpts with the *Common Interests and Values with the United States* code were given a greater relative weight (0.69) compared to those with the *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* code (0.28).

The usage of codes and their corresponding relative weights was also analyzed based on the type of remarks in which the messages appeared. The primary message of planned speeches in front of a foreign audience was based on *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States*, with 100% of the speeches including at least one excerpt under this code. The corresponding average relative weight for the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code within these speeches was the highest of any code at 0.73.

Only 36% of statements made by the presidents in response to a significant national security event, such as a terrorist attack involving American citizens or interests or the death of an adversary, contained at least one excerpt with the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code. Instead, these remarks focused on messages aimed to undermine the adversary. Such statements exhibited both a high frequency (90%) and relative weight (0.70) of the *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* code.

Overall, the message delivered to foreign audiences by Bush and Obama was relatively consistent. The message utilized with the greatest frequency and given the greatest relative weight by both presidents were those under the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code, with Obama employing this type of message more than Bush. Both presidents employed messages of *Countering Perceptions* and *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* on a comparable basis and with a similar relative weight. The primary difference between the administrations was in regard to the code of *Undermining Adversarial Leadership*. This type of message was the only code used with greater frequency and given a higher relative weight by Bush than Obama.

The research demonstrated that the United States puts forth messages of its own narrative with higher frequency and relative weight than messages of a counter narrative nature. Based on these results, the United States should continue its efforts to present its own narrative; however, to achieve a more effective holistic approach to public diplomacy and strategic communication, it should also take greater advantage of opportunities to increase its use of counter narrative messages that contest perceptions and undermine the adversary. While the presidents have utilized such messages in their responses to national security events, the counter narrative can be employed on more occasions.

In addition to the recommendation to modify this message by more consistently including messages aimed at countering perceptions and undermining the adversary, the United States can take additional steps to strengthen its public diplomacy strategy through greater coordination with Muslim partners as well as with other governments to present a united voice to effectively combat the ideology of violent Islamic extremists. Strong international partnerships can help to reinforce valuable themes, thereby increasing global assistance in counterterrorism efforts and decreasing the appeal of the violent Islamic extremist narrative.

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I. INTRODUCTION

> Are we capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against the U.S.?
>
> Donald Rumsfeld[1]

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

As another presidential term gets under way in 2013, and despite a political campaign in which national security largely took a backseat to issues of the economy and healthcare, the United States still finds itself facing a formidable adversary in violent Islamic extremism even after the massive counterterrorism efforts that have been expended over more than a decade. Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States has engaged in extensive military, intelligence, and law enforcement action against the terrorist threat in the global arena. These primarily tactical and reactive efforts of defense, detection, and deterrence have contributed to the protection of the country and its interests, but have not fully confronted the ideological foundation on which the threat is based. As a result, the United States continues to face individuals and groups seeking to do harm to its citizens, its government, and its interests.

Despite the detention or death of numerous senior leaders as well as rank and file members of the al Qa'ida organization and its affiliates, a realization has taken place that the capture or elimination of individuals is not adequate enough to quell the threat. The ideology that forms the foundation of justification for the violence continues to keep its hold among vulnerable populations, and remains resilient to the important but insufficient kinetic response of the United States.[2] As a result, the traditional practices of arresting

1 Donald Rumsfeld as quoted in Michael Jacobson, "Learning Counter-Narrative Lessons from Cases of Terrorist Dropouts," Countering Violent Extremist Narratives (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism), January 2010, 73, accessed September 3, 2012, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/opeds/4b7aaf56ca52e.pdf.

2 Frank J. Cilluffo, J. Scott Carpenter, and Matthew Levitt, "What's the Big Idea? Confronting the Ideology of Islamist Extremism," The George Washington Homeland Security Policy Institute and The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, February 4, 2011, accessed November 3, 2012, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/opeds/4d4eb93e776a6.pdf.

and killing operatives appear to have little effect on countering the radicalization campaign by which violent Islamic extremism builds its support network.[3]

The use of "soft-power," such as public diplomacy, to counter the ideology and narrative of violent extremism has been increasingly recognized as essential in any counterterrorism efforts. In its 2009 report, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy advised that countering the ideology that drives extremism is "a critical element in the overall effort to prevent and defeat the violence that emerges from it."[4] However, despite the recognition of its value and necessity to fully combat the terror threat, an effective approach largely has remained an enigma within the national security strategy of the United States. Lacking such a successful coordinated effort to contest the attraction of the radical narrative, there then appears to be no finite number of terrorists.[5]

This is not the first time in which the United States has had to pursue a communication strategy through public diplomacy in its efforts to dismantle a threat. Throughout the Cold War, the United States engaged in a war of ideas that proved to be vital in its victory over the Soviet Union.[6] Those efforts were coordinated through the United States Information Agency (USIA), an independent foreign affairs agency within the executive branch whose purpose was to explain and support American foreign policy and to promote U.S. national interests through a range of overseas information programs.[7] After the fall of the Communist Bloc, this purpose also subsided. The USIA was disbanded in 1999 and its responsibilities absorbed by entities within the U.S.

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[3] Matthew Levitt and Michael Jacobson, "Highlighting al-Qaeda's Bankrupt Ideology," The Washington Institute for Near East Policy Policywatch 1371 (May 7, 2008), accessed October 24, 2009, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/highlighting-al-qaedas-bankrupt-ideology.

[4] The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, "Rewriting the Narrative: An Integrated Strategy for Counterradicalization," March 2009, 1, accessed October 24, 2009, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org /uploads/Documents/pubs/PTF2-Counterradicalization.pdf.

[5] Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan, *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

[6] Helle C. Dale, "Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications Review: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight," The Heritage Foundation, March 22, 2010, accessed October 29, 2012, http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/03/public-diplomacy-and-strategic-communications-review-key-issues-for-congressional-oversight.

[7] University of Illinois at Chicago, "United States Information Agency Fact Sheet," February 1999, accessed November 19, 2012, http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/usiahome/factshe.htm.

Department of State (DOS). Since that time, the function of public diplomacy has been largely viewed as less important than political and military missions.[8]

Despite this relegation, and especially after the 9/11 attacks, the United States still has a continued need to promote and defend its ideas.[9] In the years since 2001, the United States has initiated and pursued a variety of public diplomacy endeavors in its attempt to construct an alternative narrative. Early initiatives were based around advertising campaigns, listening tours, and celebrity goodwill ambassadors, all serving to sell the American brand by portraying a more positive view of the United States to the rest of the world.[10] Many of the proposals and policies have looked to individuals and entities outside of the U.S. government to present an alternative narrative to violent Islamic extremism. A common refrain heard throughout relevant discussions is that the United States must "empower mainstream Muslim voices,"[11] but there is little guidance on the actual practical meaning of this phrase or what is to be done with these voices once they are empowered. Another similar and oft-repeated suggestion is that those involved in U.S. counterterrorism efforts should "solicit the interest and support of religious and cultural leaders in community dialogue."[12] The importance of such engagement with Muslim community and religious leaders here in the United States cannot be overstated; however, once again, these suggestions lack a clear explanation of how their interest and support can be most optimally utilized to combat the violent Islamic extremist narrative on a global scale. In recent years, a greater emphasis has been placed on the domestic front to combat homegrown radicalization. In 2011, the Obama Administration introduced its counter radicalization strategy entitled "Empowering Local

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[8] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Background and the 9/11 Commission Recommendations*, by Susan Epstein, CRS Report RL32607 (June 1, 2010), accessed October 21, 2012, http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/40146.pdf.

[9] Robert R. Reilly, "Ideas Matter: Restoring the Content of Public Diplomacy" The Heritage Foundation Special Report 64 (July 27, 2009), 1, accessed October 21, 2012, http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2009/07/ideas-matter-restoring-the-content-of-public-diplomacy.

[10] The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, "Rewriting the Narrative," 11.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Greg Hannah, Lindsay Clutterbuck, and Jennifer Rubin, "Radicalization or Rehabilitation: Understanding the challenge of extremist and radicalized prisoners," *RAND Corporation*, 2008, 53, accessed October 25, 2009, http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR571.

Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States" and its corresponding Strategic Implementation Plan, outlining the U.S. Government's support of local communities in efforts to prevent extremism that leads to violence.[13]

Contrary to the counter narrative strategies referenced above, in which outside voices are utilized to present the message, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the "9/11 Commission") advocated a type of strategic communication plan in which the U.S. government itself communicated with the world. Among its findings, the 9/11 Commission recommended that the U.S. government "must define what the message is, what it stands for" and "must do more to communicate its message."[14] The 9/11 Commission's recommendation also differed by positioning the U.S. government on the offensive, promoting its own message, instead of on the defensive, reacting to and countering the narrative of others.

Whether this recommendation has been implemented is debatable. As seen in the campaign leading up to the recent presidential election, words and statements are viewed through very different prisms on each side of political party lines. For example, those in his own Democratic party viewed speeches given to foreign audiences by President Obama in his first term as diplomatic achievements, but Republicans described the same speeches as "an apology tour."

Regardless of politics, the manner in which the U.S. government communicates with the rest of the world is vital to explain its policies and present the values on which America stands.[15] As the span of the globe shrinks due to technological advances, 24/7 news coverage, and the rise of social media, vigilance about foreign attitudes and views of America is as important as its military strength.[16] However, U.S. government policies

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[13] White House, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States* (Washington, DC: White House, August 2011).

[14] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, (Philip Zelikow, Executive Director; Bonnie D. Jenkins, Counsel; Ernest R. May, Senior Advisor), *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 376–377.

[15] Dale, "Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications Review."

[16] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Public Diplomacy*.

and proposals for public diplomacy and strategic communication since the 9/11 attacks have received scathing criticism, have proved futile, and have been continuously overhauled.[17]

To date, the United States has not been effective in its attempts to utilize public diplomacy and strategic communication against the threat of violent Islamic extremism. The United States has not been able to halt the infinite line of individuals willing to follow the ideology of violent Islamic extremism and participate in violent activity on its behalf, nor has it been able to put forth a consistent message or narrative of its own. Absent such a message to define the United States in its own terms, the violent extremists provide their own characterization of America.[18] The possible resulting negative foreign public opinion about the United States could affect the amount of assistance received from other countries to combat the threat of violent extremism, and could increase the recruitment efforts of terrorist groups.[19]

The efforts of the military, intelligence community, and law enforcement agencies have been successful in the detection and disruption of terrorist activity, but have not adequately addressed the ideology behind that violent activity. In response to former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's question that began this section, the United States has captured and killed many terrorists. Whether we are deterring and dissuading more terrorists than are being recruited and trained is yet to be determined.

B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

While there are differing opinions on the effectiveness of the government as the messenger of strategic communications, the United States cannot wholly surrender its role. Instead, the U.S. government must recognize and acknowledge the difficulties encountered in its attempts to counter the narrative of violent Islamic extremism, to

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[17] Christopher Paul, "Whither Strategic Communication? A Survey of Current Proposals and Recommendations," RAND Corporation, 2009, iii, accessed October 21, 2012, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2009/RAND_OP250.pdf.

[18] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 377.

[19] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Public Diplomacy*.

include the obstacles inherent in its role as the messenger, and continue to be an active participant in the dialogue. The U.S. government must be an active voice to make known its official position and avoid misrepresentation of that position by its adversaries.[20] The determination of who within the government is best suited to present that message is yet another factor in establishing a valuable public diplomacy program.[21] There are many representatives of the United States government in the global span of political and diplomatic efforts. From U.S. Ambassadors in all countries with which the United States has diplomatic relations to U.S. cabinet members including the Secretary of State, the United States has many emissaries to present the views and perspectives of the nation; however, only the president commands overflowing crowds in city squares and receives the most significant media attention for each word spoken (for example, in addition to the 3,000 invited guests to his 2009 speech in Cairo, Egypt, President Barack Obama had an additional audience of tens of millions through television, internet, and social networking).[22] Only the president is the United States' "communicator-in-chief."[23] Therefore, this thesis will continue the increased focus on public diplomacy as a vital tool in the counterterrorism efforts of the United States through an analysis of speeches given by sitting U.S. Presidents to foreign audiences, and will include consideration of the following research questions:

- What is the nature of the message delivered by U.S. Presidents to foreign audiences since the 9/11 terrorist attacks?
- Has the nature of this message differed between presidential administrations?
- Can this message be modified to better support U.S. efforts to combat violent Islamic extremism and, if so, how?

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[20] Council on Foreign Relations, "Improving the U.S. Public Diplomacy Campaign in the War Against Terrorism," *Independent Task Force Report* 38 (November 6, 2001), accessed October 29. 2012, http://www.cfr.org/terrorism/improving-us-public-diplomacy-campaign-war-against-terrorism/p4215.

[21] Michael Jacobson, "Learning Counter-Narrative Lessons from Cases of Terrorist Dropouts," *Countering Violent Extremist Narratives* (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism), January 2010, 73, accessed September 3, 2012, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org /uploads/Documents/opeds/4b7aaf56ca52e.pdf.

[22] Scott Wilson, "Obama Calls On Muslims for a 'New Beginning' With U.S.," *Washington Post*, June 5, 2009, accessed November 23, 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/04/AR2009060401024.html.

[23] Paul, "Whither Strategic Communication?" 5.

C. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

The examination of these communications will provide a better understanding of what has been done, and what should be done, to craft an effective narrative for the United States in hopes of reducing the attractiveness of the violent Islamic extremist ideology. This research will examine the position of the United States government in the ideological conversation to determine whether the United States has taken a largely defensive stance, in which the United States constantly strives to counter the narrative of violent extremist adversaries, or a more forward-leaning posture, in which the United States remains primarily concerned with presenting its own narrative based on its values and ideals. In doing so, this research will contribute to shifting the discussion from local domestic initiatives, in which individuals outside the government are relied upon to promote an alternative narrative to violent Islamic extremism, to a global perspective, in which the United States Government presents a consistent message from its leaders on the world stage. Such research will be of importance to academics in the homeland security field, homeland security policymakers, and the Executive Branch of the United States Government as potential new perspectives are introduced through which lessons can be learned regarding the construction and expression of a consistent national narrative and global message.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is an understandably broad realm of literature addressing the type of message that has been presented by the United States in its efforts to combat violent Islamic extremism. For purposes of this research, and to address the use of public diplomacy and strategic communication by the United States, a review of relevant literature first must examine the definitions of these terms and others. A review of the literature must also take a look at the effectiveness of previous attempts at strategic communication by the United States. Lastly, to clearly characterize the nature of previous U.S. efforts, the literature review must also look at the role of the government as messenger as well the content of its message.

1. Definitions

a. Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications

Available literature differs on the definitions of public diplomacy and strategic communication, with some using these terms synonymously and others subordinating one term to the other.[24] Among the more straightforward and simpler definitions, Wolf and Rosen describe public diplomacy as the process of explaining and advocating American values to the world.[25] Epstein provides a comparable definition, stating that public diplomacy is the promotion of the interests, cultures, and policies of the United States by informing and influencing foreign populations.[26] The U.S. government provides a broader description, with DOS stating that the mission of U.S. public diplomacy is

> … to support the achievement of U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives, advance national interests, and enhance national security by informing and influencing foreign publics and by expanding and strengthening the relationship between the people and government of the United States and citizens of the rest of the world.[27]

Likewise, the Department of Defense (DoD) defines public diplomacy as

> [t]hose overt international public information activities of the United States Government designed to promote United States foreign policy objectives by seeking to understand, inform, and influence foreign audiences and opinion makers, and by broadening the dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.[28]

In many attempts at its definition, public diplomacy is contrasted with other related concepts. In distinguishing it from traditional diplomacy, which is focused on dialogue between governments, Amr emphasizes public diplomacy's communication

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[24] Paul, "Whither Strategic Communication?" 2.

[25] Charles Wolf, Jr. and Brian Rosen, "Public Diplomacy: How to Think About and Improve It," RAND Corporation, 2004, iii, accessed November 18, 2012, http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/2004/RAND_OP134.pdf.

[26] [26] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Public Diplomacy*.

[27] "Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs," U.S. Department of State, accessed November 17, 2012, http://www.state.gov/r/.

[28] "DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms," U.S. Department of Defense, accessed November 17, 2012, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/.

with non-state civil society actors such as the general public, media, and non-governmental organizations.[29] Such a comparison is also made by Beehner, who contrasts the government-to-government conduct of traditional diplomacy with the aim of public diplomacy towards the general public and influential figures like academics, journalists, and business leaders.[30] Cull makes the significant distinction between public diplomacy and public affairs, stating that engagement by an international actor with a foreign public is public diplomacy, while engagement between an actor and its own public is public affairs.[31] A different contrast between public diplomacy and public affairs is made by Reilly, who describes the former as the explanation of American *principles* to foreign audiences and the latter as the explanation of specific American *policies*.[32] With still another comparison, the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy separates public diplomacy from propaganda by pointing out the usually pejorative connotation of the latter.[33] Despite this negativity normally associated with propaganda, its original meaning shares a similar definition with public diplomacy and is described by Bernays as the "mechanism by which ideas are disseminated on a large scale… in the broad sense of an organized effort to spread a particular belief or doctrine" and a "consistent, enduring effort to create or shape events to influence the relations of the public to an enterprise, idea or group."[34]

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[29] Hady Amr, "The Need to Communicate: How to Improve U.S. Public Diplomacy with the Islamic World," *The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at The Brookings Institution* Analysis Paper Number 6 (January 2004): 2, accessed November 18, 2012, http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/papers/2004/1/01islamicworld%20amr/amr20040101.pdf.

[30] Lionel Beehner, "Perceptions of U.S. Public Diplomacy," Council on Foreign Relations, September 29, 2005, accessed November 18, 2012, http://www.cfr.org/media-and-foreign-policy/perceptions-us-public-diplomacy/p8934?breadcrumb=%2Fissue%2Fpublication_list%3Fid%3D448.

[31] Nicholas J. Cull, *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past*, (Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2009), 12, accessed November 18, 2012, http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/publications/perspectives/CPDPerspectivesLessons.pdf.

[32] Reilly, "Ideas Matter," 1.

[33] Kristen M. Lord, "Public Engagement 101: What Strategic Communication Is, Isn't, and Should Be," *Joint Force Quarterly* 56 (1st quarter 2010): 7, accessed November 18, 2012, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/jfq/lord_public_engagement_101.pdf.

[34] Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* (Brooklyn, NY: Ig Publishing, 1928).

Strategic communication is a concept becoming more widespread after years of having been more traditionally associated with the military. As with public diplomacy, the DoD offers a broad definition of strategic communication as

> [f]ocused United States Government efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of United States Government interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power.[35]

In 2010, the Obama Administration provided a similar definition of strategic communication by referring to

> … (a) the synchronization of words and deeds and how they will be perceived by selected audiences, as well as (b) programs and activities deliberately aimed at communicating and engaging with intended audiences, including those implemented by public affairs, public diplomacy, and information operations professionals.[36]

The definition is simplified by Lord, who describes strategic communication as "the promotion of national interests through efforts to inform, engage, and influence foreign publics." [37]

Given the lack of consensus of any clear distinction between public diplomacy and strategic communication, and the wide overlap between the two concepts, the terms will be used synonymously for the purposes of this research and will refer to the promotion of American interests and values to inform and influence foreign populations.

b. Ideology and Narrative

The term ideology is most often utilized within the definition of the term terrorism, such as in the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, which defines terrorism as "often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs."

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[35] "DOD Dictionary," U.S. Department of Defense.

[36] White House, *National Strategy for Strategic Communication* (Washington, DC: White House, 2010).

[37] Lord, "Public Engagement 101," 7.

By itself, however, ideology is most simply defined as a set of ideas or beliefs that are characteristic of an individual or group.[38] Expanding on this definition, the U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency Field Manual states that ideology provides a prism through which followers can perceive their situation.[39]

The Counterinsurgency Field Manual continues on to describe narratives as stories that express the values, character, or self-identity of a group, and as the central means by which ideologies are expressed and absorbed. Similarly, according to Sparkes and Smith, a narrative is a shared frame comprised of various stories and embedded in society, forming the basis of a culture's identity and actions.[40] Such a narrative supports a variety of cognitive and communicative activities within a culture or society.[41]

For the purposes of this research, the term ideology will refer to a set of beliefs; for example, the set of beliefs that form the foundation of violent Islamic extremist groups such as al Qa'ida. The term narrative will refer to the words and messages by which that ideology is described.

2. U.S. Public Diplomacy

a. Assessment of Efforts to Date

Numerous authors, experts, and practitioners have concluded that U.S. public diplomacy and strategic communication efforts are critical, but currently inadequate to meet today's needs.[42] Throughout the years, some have argued, al Qa'ida was unchallenged in its strategic communications given the relative quiet of the U.S. government in the ideological debate. This silence may have been attributed to the belief

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[38] Tom Quiggin, "Understanding al-Qaeda's Ideology for Counter-Narrative Work," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 3, no. 2 (2009), accessed January 16, 2011, http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/67/html.

[39] Department of the Army. *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* 3-24 (December 2006): 1–14.

[40] Andrew C. Sparkes and Brett Smith, "Narrative Constructionist Theory," in *Handbook of Constructionist Research*, ed. by James A. Holstein and Jaber F. Gubrium (New York: The Guilford Press).

[41] David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan, eds, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* (London: Routledge, 2005), accessed January 26, 2011, http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/herman145/RENT.html.

[42] Paul, "Whither Strategic Communication?" v.

that the U.S. government could not be a credible voice, or that government participation would elevate the visibility and status of violent Islamic extremists, or perhaps it was a result of the lack of a coordinated and sustained effort across the government.[43]

Early post-9/11 U.S. public diplomacy initiatives, based on efforts to sell the American brand through a campaign to portray a positive view of the United States, were "widely regarded as ineffective in stemming the tide of radicalization."[44] In 2009, Paul conducted a review of recent proposals and recommendations regarding the improvement of U.S. public diplomacy and strategic communication. The study determined that there was extensive support of the need for increased leadership, greater coordination, more resources, and further clarity of strategy for U.S. efforts.[45] Additional studies, dating back to July 2002, have concurred with the assessment that U.S. public diplomacy efforts have been hindered by a lack of leadership, poor coordination among agencies involved, and minimal resources.[46]

The DOS Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC), established in 2010, has been commended for its work in developing strategic narratives for the United States to use to challenge and discredit the violent extremist message.[47] However, the CSCC is most often seen as a reactive program, with defensive terms used to describe the CSCC's work as an explicit counter to the extremist narrative. Specifically, Dale declares the CSCC's digital outreach team as "among its most promising initiatives," but depicts it as a group that "takes the fight to contested media websites and forums."[48] Similarly, Levitt describes the CSCC's mission to "identify,

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[43] Richard LeBaron, "State Department's Role in Countering Violent Extremism," in *Finding a Balance: U.S. Security Interests and the Arab Awakening*, ed. Matthew Levitt, *The Washington Institute for Near East Politics* Policy Focus 119 (May 2012), 5: 16.

[44] Levitt and Jacobson, "Highlighting al-Qaeda's Bankrupt Ideology."

[45] Paul, "Whither Strategic Communication?" 4.

[46] Helle C. Dale, "U.S. Public Diplomacy: The Search for a National Strategy," *The Heritage Foundation* Executive Memorandum No. 1029 (February 11, 2008), accessed October 29, 2012, http://www.heritage.org/research/nationalsecurity/em1029.cfm.

[47] LeBaron, "State Department's Role in Countering Violent Extremism," 16.

[48] Helle C. Dale, "U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy: Sticks and Carrots," *The Foundry* (blog), September 15, 2011, accessed October 29, 2012, http://blog.heritage.org/2011/09/15/u-s-counterterrorism-strategy-sticks-and-carrots/.

confront, and undermine" the communications of violent extremist groups and the use of its developed narratives to "rebut and preempt" the adversary's message.[49]

More recently, critiques of the Obama Administration's 2011 domestically focused counter radicalization strategy call attention to the lack of specificity in its general language and the absence of any detailed initiatives in its proposals.[50] In addition, Bjelopera questions whether such a strategy places the federal government in the position of deciding which ideas and ideologies are dangerous and which are safe, despite the strategy's attention to the importance of First Amendment concerns.[51]

As Reilly observes, there are no sales figures by which to easily measure success in public diplomacy.[52] The impact of public diplomacy and strategic communication efforts are difficult to gauge, with some standards of measurement largely based on quantity of interviews and amount of television time of U.S. government representatives.[53] Furthermore, without clearly defined goals and metrics, these efforts are simply a process for which results are measured by the size of its budget.[54]

b. The United States Government as Messenger

A review of relevant literature revealed broad support for a U.S. strategy to counter the narrative of violent Islamic extremism,[55] but there are varying views on the

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[49] Richard LeBaron, "State Department's Role in Countering Violent Extremism," 15–16.

[50] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Countering Violent Extremism in the United States*, by Jerome P. Bjelopera, CRS Report RL42553 (May 31, 2013), accessed September 3, 2012. http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R42553.pdf.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Reilly, "Ideas Matter," 22.

[53] U.S. Department of State Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy Policy Coordinating Committee, *U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*, June 2007: 33, accessed on October 24, 2012, http://www.cfr.org/public-diplomacy/us-national-strategy-public-diplomacy-strategic-communication/p13601.

[54] Dale, "U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy."

[55] Levitt and Jacobson, "Highlighting al-Qaeda's Bankrupt Ideology"; Robert Satloff, *The Battle of Ideas in the War on Terror: Essays on U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Middle East* (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2004); Paul Shemella, "Reducing Ideological Support for Terrorism," *Strategic Insights* 8, no. 2 (April 2009), accessed October 24, 2009, http://www.nps.edu/academics/centers/ccc/publications/onlinejournal/2009/apr/shemellaApr09.html; The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, "Rewriting the Narrative"; Dale, "U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy."

depth of its potential success based on the role of the U.S. government as the messenger of an alternative narrative. In addition to the basic difficulties that the United States has had in previous attempts to refute the violent Islamic extremist narrative, there are reasonable arguments that this task is not easily accomplished because of cultural differences as well as the fervent nature with which beliefs are held. A 2009 report by Lord, Rosen, and Nagle for the Center for a New American Security states that the battle for hearts and minds is not between Muslim societies and the West, but rather within Muslim societies because voices from within the culture are far more persuasive than those of outsiders. Likewise, Jacobson stresses the importance of recognizing that governments are not always the most effective messengers for presenting the alternative narrative.[56] The message of the government may be viewed as propaganda, or provide fodder for conspiracy theories.[57] As stated by Peter G. Peterson, chairman of the Council on Foreign Relation's Public Diplomacy Task Force, the U.S. government must be heedful of the basic creed that if one does not trust the messenger, they will not trust the message.[58]

Epstein also expresses limitations to public diplomacy when the problem is based on disagreements with U.S. foreign policies as opposed to misperceptions of the United States.[59] An additional view expressed by Satloff, focusing on the degree to which individuals held extremist views, advised that the United States can do nothing to change the beliefs of the most hardened violent extremists. Rather, Satloff recommended that U.S. policy should instead seek defeat of the extremists "through military means for those who use violence to gain power, and through political means for those whose tactics take a more circuitous path to the same objective."[60]

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[56] Jacobson, "Learning Counter-Narrative Lessons."

[57] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Countering Violent Extremism in the United States*, 27.

[58] Peter G. Peterson, "Privatising U.S. Public Diplomacy," *Council on Foreign Relations*, January 21, 2004, accessed November 18, 2012, http://www.cfr.org/media-and-public-opinion/privatising-us-public-diplomacy/p6697.

[59] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Public Diplomacy*.

[60] Satloff, *The Battle of Ideas in the War on Terror*, p. xiv.

c. Content of Message

There are multiple and varying views on the type of message that should be put forth by the U.S. government in its efforts to combat violent Islamic extremism. The call for a counter narrative, or a communication strategy based in response to the messages of violent Islamic extremists, has been consistent in the years since the 9/11 attacks. Those who promote this reactive approach endorse a challenge of ideas, wherein the United States confronts the violent extremist ideology with an opposing argument.[61] For example, Leuprecht, Hataley, Moskalenko, and McCauley recommend a minimum of four different counter narratives to confront the adversary's ideology in front of different audiences; specifically, these counter narratives must: (1) counter the perception that the West is engaged in a war on Islam; (2) counter the perception that violent Islamic extremists are defending their religion; (3) counter the perception that the actions of violent Islamic extremists are legitimate acts of war; and (4) counter the perception that good Muslims have a duty to support the violent extremists.[62] To craft a counter narrative, Jacobson advocates messages that undermine extremist leadership and diminish the leaders' authority and credibility.[63] Echoing the same type of strategy aimed at discrediting extremist leaders, Cilluffo, Carpenter, and Levitt recommend negative imagery and messages that expose the hypocrisy of violent extremists' words versus their actions.[64] One example of this type of approach is the 2006 release by the DoD of video of former al Qa'ida in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi appearing unfamiliar with the operation of a machine gun as well as wearing American brand sneakers.[65] Another example is an emphasis on the killing of civilians as well as fellow Muslims by violent Islamic extremists.[66]

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[61] Dale, "U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy"; Jacobson, "Learning Counter-Narrative Lessons."

[62] Christian Leuprecht, et al, "Winning the Battle but Losing the War? Narrative and Counternarratives Strategy," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 3, no. 2 (2009), accessed February 2, 2012, http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/68/html.

[63] Jacobson, "Learning Counter-Narrative Lessons."

[64] "What's the Big Idea?"

[65] CNN, "U.S.: Outtakes show al-Zarqawi as poor gunman," May 4, 2006, accessed November 21, 2012, http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/05/04/iraq.al.zarqawi/.

[66] Jacobson, "Learning Counter-Narrative Lessons," 76.

A strategy to highlight such murders, however, could also be used *against* the United States—for example, if the adversary lays claims of innocent civilian casualties resulting from American drone strikes.[67] In such instances, when the message being delivered by the United States is not consistent with observations (or even perceptions) of American activities, the public diplomacy will not be effective. Therefore, Epstein advocates for a more proactive approach in which the United States clearly and openly explains its foreign policy actions.[68]

In 2007, DOS published the U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication under the direction of Karen Hughes, the Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy during the George W. Bush Administration. This strategy promoted a hybrid approach of both a counter narrative as well as a proactive message from the United States through three objectives: to offer a positive vision of hope and opportunity, rooted in America's most basic values; to isolate and undermine violent extremists; and to cultivate common interests and values between Americans and people throughout the world.[69]

Others also endorse a less reactive response by supporting a message based on the United States' beliefs—in other words, a message based on the United States' own ideology and not in response to the ideology of others. As previously discussed, the 9/11 Commission recommended that the United States identify its message based on its values and ideals, and clearly communicate that message to the world.[70] More recently, National Security Council member Quintan Wiktorowicz has stated that the United States will combat violent ideologies with "an inclusive, positive narrative."[71]

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[67] Marc Lynch, "Rhetoric and Reality: Countering Terrorism in the Age of Obama," Center for a New American Security, June 2010, accessed October 29, 2012, http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_Rhetoric%20and%20Reality_Lynch.pdf.

[68] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Public Diplomacy*.

[69] U.S. Department of State, *U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*, 33.

[70] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 376.

[71] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Countering Violent Extremism in the United States*, 27.

Nonetheless, in a recent speech, current Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy, Tara Sonenshine, acknowledged that the main challenge of public diplomacy is trying to explain America. Sonenshine provided an explanation despite the difficulties of this task, saying that

> America is a nation with strong principles and purpose. We're a country whose strengths lie in individual resourcefulness and national resilience. We tend to proceed from the notion that each individual has the potential to achieve his or her individual dreams or desires, while also contributing to the common good. We believe in unlocking human potential through access, rights and the human freedom to imagine, to innovate, to inspire, to achieve peace and prosperity. We believe in interests, values, and security.[72]

3. Conclusion

This examination of literature regarding U.S. public diplomacy and strategic communication confirms the need for additional study of this topic area. Though there appears to be a large consensus in regard to the shortcomings of U.S. public diplomacy efforts in the years since the 9/11 attacks, there also exists uncertainty in the United States' ability to promote a viable alternative narrative. Despite these deficiencies and doubts, however, as Reilly notes, the United States must primarily clarify its message to the world.[73]

The development of a coherent and effective message must begin with a retrospective exploration of previous communications of the United States to the world. Since 2001, the importance of words and phrases has been periodically recognized by U.S. Administrations. For example, early in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the George W. Bush Administration realized the use of the word "crusade" to describe the U.S. military response could be inflammatory towards Islam, given its historically religious meaning.[74] The 2007 U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication recommended that government officials avoid using religious language,

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[72] "The State of American Public Diplomacy" (remarks, American Security Project, June 28, 2012), accessed on November 19, 2012, http://newsroom-magazine.com/2012/executive-branch/state-department/states-tara-sonenshine-the-challenge-of-public-diplomacy-is-to-explain-america/.

[73] "Ideas Matter."

[74] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Public Diplomacy*.

if possible, because "it can mean different things and is easily misconstrued."[75] Years later, the Administration of Barack Obama attempted to distinguish itself from its predecessor by defining the threat as one emanating from "violent extremism" instead of "radical Islam" and eliminating from use the phrase "Global War on Terror."[76]

Though these examples demonstrate that some attention has been paid to the content of communications, there has not been any apparent prolonged consistent effort to put forth a meaningful message to the world. While numerous studies have examined the organizational structure behind strategic communication efforts, a lesser number have focused on the substance contained within those communications.[77] As a result, public diplomacy efforts will not succeed until its textual content is addressed and a coherent message is developed.

[75] U.S. Department of State, *U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*, 25.

[76] Lynch, "Rhetoric and Reality"; Al Kamen, "The End of the Global War on Terror," *The Washington Post* In the Loop (blog), March 24, 2009, accessed February 17, 2013, http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2009/03/23/the_end_of_the_global_war_on_t.html.

[77] Reilly, "Ideas Matter."

II. ANALYSIS

> [T]oo often since 9/11, the extremists have defined us, not the other way around. When I am President, that will change. We will author our own story.
>
> Barack Obama[78]

A. METHODOLOGY

1. Qualitative Analysis

To determine the type of message that has been presented by the U.S. government since the 9/11 attacks in its efforts to combat violent Islamic extremism, a qualitative analysis will be conducted on a purposeful sampling of speeches and statements given by the sitting U.S. President to foreign audiences in the years since 9/11. This analysis will attempt to identify the nature of the message delivered by the U.S. Presidents through an examination of themes and patterns in their words and phrases.

The results of this inquiry will then be examined to address the underlying research questions and determine any differences in the nature of the message between presidential administrations and how this message can be modified to best support the U.S. in its efforts to combat violent Islamic extremism.

2. Sample Selection

The speeches and statements selected for this analysis took place in the period since the 9/11 attacks in order to evaluate the message of the United States in this changed world. The era of homeland security began at 8:46am EDT on September 11, 2001, when American Airlines Flight 11 was crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York, NY. Words and phrases that seem commonplace now—homeland security, Guantanamo, waterboarding—were unknown to the regular citizen. The ensuing years brought attention and costs to national security never before seen in

[78] Barack Obama, "The War We Need to Win" (remarks, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, August 1, 2007), accessed October 21, 2012, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/A%20National%20Strategic%20Narrative.pdf.

the history of the United States, and with this increased focus came increased debate about the role and actions of the United States in its campaign against terror.

The selected timeframe also spanned the administrations of both a Republican and Democrat U.S. President, thereby allowing for a comparison to determine whether the message presented to foreign audiences differed between political affiliations.

Though certain domestic speeches may garner substantial media coverage around the world, the selected sample does not include campaign speeches at which time the presidents solely were in the role of candidate; inauguration speeches, which tend to consist of over-arching visionary themes; or State of the Union speeches, which are most often laundry lists of lofty goals and objectives. Such speeches are largely crafted towards a domestic audience, though the content may reach across the globe with today's technology. Instead, to best capture the message being presented on an international platform, the purposeful sample of speeches focused on those specifically tailored for a foreign audience and, preferentially when possible, those in front of audiences comprised of student or citizen groups as opposed to limited or restricted audiences of governmental bodies or international conferences. In addition, an additional number of statements were selected which were made by the president in response to a significant national security event, such as a terrorist attack involving American citizens or interests, or the death of an adversary. Although sometimes issued in written form and not verbally delivered, these statements were included to provide insight into the language used in reactive situations as well as an additional point of comparison with pre-planned speeches in front of large audiences.

Efforts to locate a comprehensive list of speeches given by U.S. Presidents to foreign audiences proved arduous. The best source of information was determined to be the Public Papers of the Presidents series published by the Office of the Federal Register at the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. Each volume of the Public Papers, published twice a year, covers an approximate six-month period and contains the papers and speeches of the U.S. President that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the specified time period. To compile the sample needed for this

research, each volume covering the relevant time period since the 9/11 attacks was reviewed and all speeches made to a foreign audience, or statements made in response to a national security event, were extracted.

Volumes of Public Papers during the last year of the Bush presidency in 2008 have not yet been published, nor for the most recent years of the Obama presidency in 2010, 2011, and 2012. Therefore, all speeches for this time period were obtained from the respective White House website covering each administration and reviewed under the same process.

The review of the Public Papers volumes, as well as the White House websites, yielded a list of 135 speeches given in front of a foreign audience, or in response to a national security event. Another review was then completed to primarily select those speeches that fit the criteria of the purposeful sample for this research; specifically, those given in front of foreign audiences comprised of student or citizen groups, as opposed to limited or restricted audiences of governmental bodies or international conferences. The selection eliminated other overseas speaking events such as press conferences, press availabilities, and question and answer sessions with audiences, as well as speeches dedicated to a specific and narrow topic (e.g., Obama's Remarks on the 65th Anniversary of D-Day in Normandy, France). The statements given in response to a national security event were also then reviewed to select those events directly impacting American citizens or interests, or the death of an adversary.

Upon completion of this review, a total number of 50 speeches and statements were identified for the research sample, as listed in Table 1.

Date	President	City/Country	Title as Given[79]
9/11/01	Bush	Washington, DC	Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks
2/20/02	Bush	Dorasan, South Korea	Remarks at the Dorasan Train Station
2/22/02	Bush	Beijing, China	Remarks in Beijing on Confirmation of the Death of Daniel Pearl
2/22/02	Bush	Beijing, China	Remarks at Tsinghua University in Beijing
5/24/02	Bush	Moscow, Russia	Remarks to Community and Religious Leader in Moscow
11/20/02	Bush	Prague, Czech Republic	Remarks to the Prague Atlantic Student Summit
11/23/02	Bush	Vilnius, Lithuania	Remarks to the People of Lithuania
11/23/02	Bush	Bucharest, Romania	Remarks to the People of Romania
5/31/03	Bush	Krakow, Poland	Remarks to the People of Poland
7/8/03	Bush	Goree Island, Senegal	Remarks at Goree Island, Senegal
10/15/03	Bush	Washington, DC	Statement on the Terrorist Attack on Americans in the Gaza Strip
10/19/03	Bush	Bangkok, Thailand	Remarks at the Royal Thai Army Headquarters
11/19/03	Bush	London, UK	Remarks at Whitehall Palace
12/14/03	Bush	Washington, DC	Address to the Nation on the Capture of Saddam Hussein
5/12/04	Bush	Washington, DC	Remarks on the Death of Nicholas Berg
6/18/04	Bush	Seattle, Washington	Remarks on the Death of Paul Johnson

[79] The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Federal Register, "Public Papers of the Presidents," http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/publications/presidential-papers.html; The White House, President George W. Bush, "Presidential News and Speeches," http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/; The White House, President Barack Obama, "Speeches and Remarks," http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-and-remarks.

Date	President	City/Country	Title as Given[79]
6/29/04	Bush	Istanbul, Turkey	Remarks at Galatasaray University
12/1/04	Bush	Halifax, Canada	Remarks in Halifax, Canada
2/24/05	Bush	Bratislava, Slovakia	Remarks in Bratislava
5/7/05	Bush	Riga, Latvia	Remarks in Riga
5/10/05	Bush	Tbilisi, Georgia	Remarks in Freedom Square in Tbilisi
11/6/05	Bush	Brasilia, Brazil	Remarks in a Discussion with Young Leaders
11/16/05	Bush	Kyoto, Japan	Remarks in Kyoto
6/8/06	Bush	Washington, DC	Remarks on the Death of Senior Al Qaida Associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi
6/21/06	Bush	Vienna, Austria	Remarks in a Discussion with Foreign Students in Vienna
6/22/06	Bush	Budapest, Hungary	Remarks in Budapest
7/14/06	Bush	St. Petersburg, Russia	Remarks in a Discussion With Civic Leaders
11/16/06	Bush	Singapore	Remarks at the National Singapore University
11/28/06	Bush	Riga, Latvia	Remarks at Latvia University
3/9/07	Bush	Sao Paulo, Brazil	Remarks Prior to a Discussion With Members of the Community in Sao Paulo
1/13/08	Bush	Abu Dhabi, UAE	President Bush Discusses Importance of Freedom in the Middle East
8/7/08	Bush	Bangkok, Thailand	President Bush Visits Bangkok, Thailand
9/20/08	Bush	Washington, DC	President Bush Condemns Terrorist Attack in Islamabad, Pakistan
11/28/08	Bush	Washington, DC	Statement by the President on Horrific Attacks in Mumbai

Date	President	City/Country	Title as Given[79]
4/3/09	Obama	Strasbourg, France	Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting
4/5/09	Obama	Prague, Czech Republic	Remarks in Prague
4/7/09	Obama	Istanbul, Turkey	Remarks in a Discussion With Students
6/4/09	Obama	Cairo, Egypt	Remarks in Cairo
7/7/09	Obama	Moscow, Russia	Remarks by the President at the New Economic School Graduation
11/16/09	Obama	Shanghai, China	Remarks by President Barack Obama at Town Hall Meeting with Future Chinese Leaders
11/7/10	Obama	Mumbai, India	Remarks by the President and the First Lady in Town Hall with Students in Mumbai, India
11/10/10	Obama	Jakarta, Indonesia	Remarks by the President at the University of Indonesia
3/20/11	Obama	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Remarks by the President to the People of Brazil
5/2/11	Obama	Washington, DC	Remarks by the President on Osama Bin Laden
5/23/11	Obama	Dublin, Ireland	Remarks by the President at Irish Celebration in Dublin, Ireland
11/4/11	Obama	Cannes, France	Remarks by President Obama in Honoring the Alliance Between the United States and France
3/26/12	Obama	Seoul, Republic of Korea	Remarks by President Obama at Hankuk University
4/15/12	Obama	Cartagena, Columbia	Remarks by President Obama at a Land Titling Event
9/12/12	Obama	Washington, DC	Remarks by the President on the Deaths of U.S. Embassy Staff in Libya
11/19/12	Obama	Rangoon, Burma	Remarks by President Obama at the University of Yangon

Table 1. List of speeches and statements selected for purposeful sample.

Of the 50 speeches and statements selected, 34 were delivered by Bush and 16 by Obama, resulting in a sample size approximately proportional to their respective time in office. Eleven of the 50 selections were responsive statements made in the aftermath of a national security event such as a terrorist attack involving American citizens or interests or upon the death of an adversary. For purposes of comparison, the sample selections were also defined according to the geographic location in which they were given, using the same regions of the world as delineated by different geographic bureaus of DOS[80]: 1 in Africa (sub-Sahara), 11 in East Asia and the Pacific, 20 in Europe and Eurasia, 2 in the Near East (North Africa and the Middle East), 1 in South and Central Asia, and 15 in the Western Hemisphere. These descriptive categories are further illustrated in Figure 1.

[80] U.S. Department of State, "Countries and Regions," accessed November 19, 2012, http://www.state.gov/countries/.

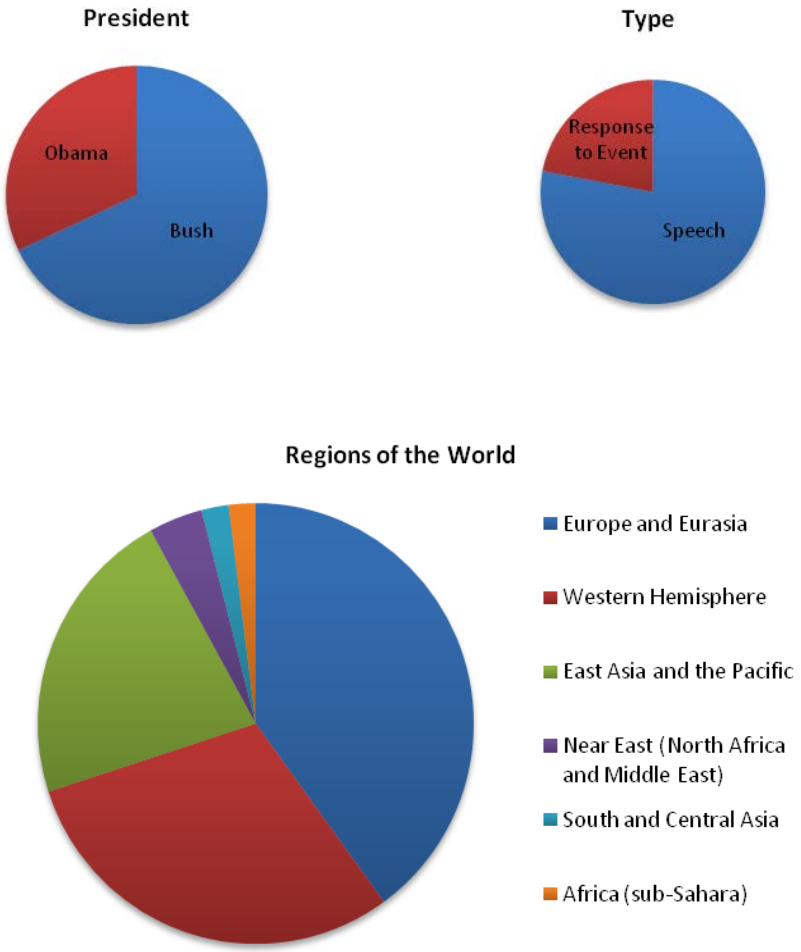

Figure 1. A graphic illustration depicting the ratios of characteristics of the research sample.

3. Analytical Process

Each individual speech was assessed for relevant information using a system of codes, defined by Miles and Huberman as "tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study."[81] Each code corresponded to a defined category representing the type of message being presented within each speech. As revealed during the review of pertinent literature, there are varying opinions on the recommended nature of the message of the United States, with some championing a reactive counter narrative while others endorse a more proactive

[81] *Qualitative Date Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2nd Edition) (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1994).

message based on the United States' own values, beliefs, and common traits. The designated categories for the coding used in this qualitative analysis reflect these differing recommendations, as illustrated in Figure 2.

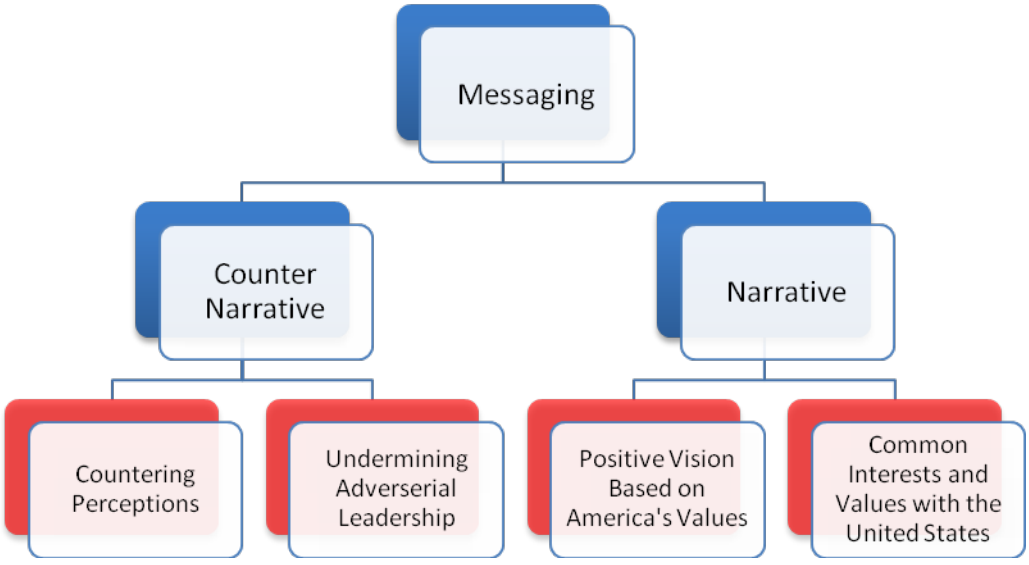

Figure 2. Categories of codes used for analysis. Messages projected in relevant excerpts of each selected speech or statement were characterized as a counter narrative or a narrative and were labeled with one of four appropriate underlying codes.

Using these codes, each speech was evaluated and relevant excerpts were sorted into one of the four subcategories in Figure 2. Once the message was determined to be either a reactive counter narrative in response to the messages of violent Islamic extremists or a proactive narrative based on the views of the United States, one of the four codes was applied as appropriate.

- ***Countering Perceptions***

In accordance with the recommendation of Leuprecht et al., this code was applied when the message was a counter narrative that refuted perceptions fueled by the adversary's ideology, such as perceptions that the West is engaged in a war on Islam, violent Islamic extremists are defending their religion, the actions of violent Islamic

extremists are legitimate acts of war, or good Muslims have a duty to support the violent extremists.[82]

- ***Undermining Adversarial Leadership***

This second code under the reactive counter narrative heading was given to statements that served to discredit violent extremist leaders by diminishing their authority and credibility or by revealing their hypocrisy, as promoted by Jacobson and Cilluffo, Carpenter, and Levitt, respectively.[83]

- ***Positive Vision Based on America's Values***

The 9/11 Commission and others supported a positive message, based on the United States' own views and beliefs.[84] All such proactive messages, grounded in the United States' own ideology instead of in response to the ideology of others, were therefore categorized under this code.

- ***Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States***

The second code for proactive narrative statements was assigned to those statements which aimed to cultivate common interests and values between Americans and others throughout the world, as recommended as part of the hybrid approach of the U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication.[85]

B. ANALYTICAL RESULTS

1. General Observation

An analysis of the selected sample revealed a predictable template for all speeches, regardless of the speaker. After the obligatory acknowledgments of hosts and guests, and some witty and usually self-deprecating comments, each president often included a historical reference about the country in which he was speaking before addressing any specific subject matter. This reference often cited a historical connection

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[82] "Winning the Battle but Losing the War?"

[83] "Learning Counter-Narrative Lessons"; "What's the Big Idea?"

[84] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*; U.S. Department of State, *U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*; U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Countering Violent Extremism in the United States*.

[85] U.S. Department of State, *U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*.

between the host country and the United States, an element that will be addressed later in reference to the code of *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States*.

2. Summary of Code Analysis

A total of 520 excerpts from the selected speeches and statements were tagged with one of the four identified codes, with the greatest number labeled with the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code and the least number being given the *Countering Perceptions* and *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* codes. The complete breakdown of excerpts by code is illustrated in Figure 3.

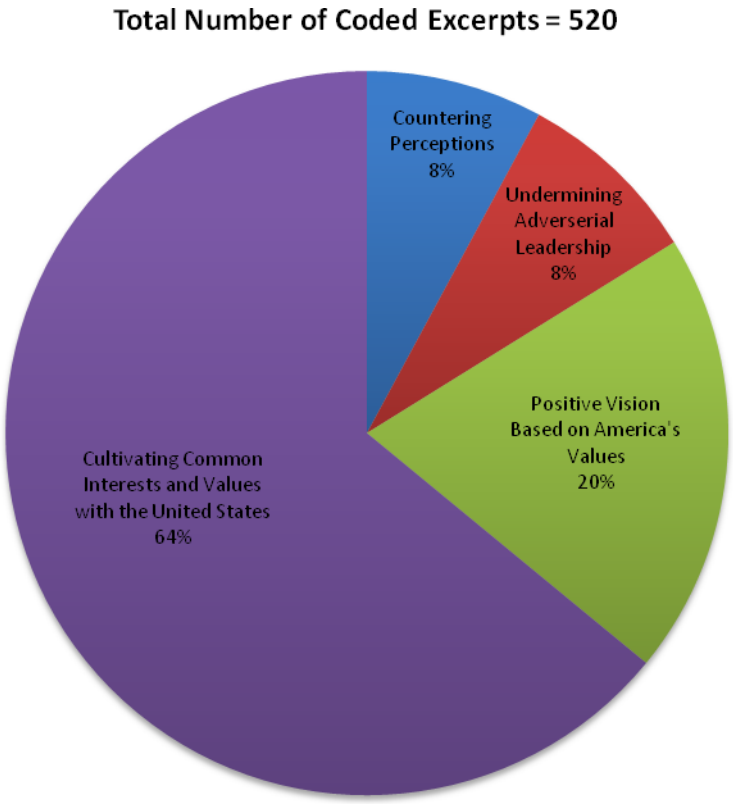
Total Number of Coded Excerpts = 520
Countering Perceptions 8%
Undermining Adverserial Leadership 8%
Positive Vision Based on America's Values 20%
Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States 64%

Figure 3. A representation of the percentage of total excerpts associated with each identified code.

Table 2 presents a more detailed view of the breakdown of coded excerpts, as it provides the number of times each of the four codes appear in each speech. In addition, Table 2 provides a corresponding Intensity Index to demonstrate the relative weight given

to each type of code within each speech. This index is based on a scale of 0 to 1.0, and was calculated by dividing the number of instances of each code by the total number of coded excerpts within the speech. These figures will be further examined for each code, and comparisons will be conducted between presidents as well as types of remarks (speech, or statement in response to an event). The summary of themes appearing within the excerpts under each code also will be discussed in further detail and similar comparisons will be conducted between presidents and type of remarks.

Date	President	Title as Given[86]	Countering Perceptions	Countering Perceptions Intensity Index	Undermining Adversarial Leadership	Undermining Adversarial Leadership Intensity Index	Positive Vision Based on America's Values	Positive Vision Based on America's Values Intensity Index	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States Intensity Index	Totals
9/11/01	Bush	Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks	0	0	2	0.29	4	0.57	1	0.14	7
2/20/02	Bush	Remarks at the Dorasan Train Station	1	0.17	0	0	3	0.50	2	0.33	6
2/22/02	Bush	Remarks at Tsinghua University in Beijing	1	0.07	0	0	11	0.73	3	0.20	15
2/22/02	Bush	Remarks in Beijing on Confirmation of the Death of Daniel Pearl	0	0	1	1.00	0	0	0	0	1
5/24/02	Bush	Remarks to Community and Religious Leader in Moscow	2	0.17	0	0	2	0.17	8	0.67	12

[86] The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Federal Register, "Public Papers of the Presidents," http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/publications/presidential-papers.html; The White House, President George W. Bush, "Presidential News and Speeches," http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/; The White House, President Barack Obama, "Speeches and Remarks," http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-and-remarks.

Date	President	Title as Given[86]	Countering Perceptions	Countering Perceptions Intensity Index	Undermining Adversarial Leadership	Undermining Adversarial Leadership Intensity Index	Positive Vision Based on America's Values	Positive Vision Based on America's Values Intensity Index	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States Intensity Index	Totals
11/20/02	Bush	Remarks to the Prague Atlantic Student Summit	0	0	0	0	1	0.14	6	0.86	7
11/23/02	Bush	Remarks to the People of Lithuania	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1.00	2
11/23/02	Bush	Remarks to the People of Romania	0	0	1	0.33	0	0	2	0.67	3
5/31/03	Bush	Remarks to the People of Poland	3	0.17	0	0	6	0.33	9	0.50	18
7/8/03	Bush	Remarks at Goree Island, Senegal	0	0	0	0	2	0.40	3	0.60	5
10/15/03	Bush	Statement on the Terrorist Attack on Americans in the Gaza Strip	0	0	1	0.50	1	0.50	0	0	2
10/19/03	Bush	Remarks at the Royal Thai Army Headquarters	1	0.10	1	0.10	1	0.10	7	0.70	10
11/19/03	Bush	Remarks at Whitehall Palace	3	0.14	3	0.14	5	0.23	11	0.50	22
12/14/03	Bush	Address to the Nation on the Capture of Saddam Hussein	0	0	1	0.25	2	0.50	1	0.25	4
5/12/04	Bush	Remarks on the Death of Nicholas Berg	0	0	1	1.00	0	0	0	0	1
6/18/04	Bush	Remarks on the Death of Paul Johnson	0	0	1	1.00	0	0	0	0	1
6/29/04	Bush	Remarks at Galatasaray University	5	0.33	2	0.13	4	0.27	4	0.27	15
12/1/04	Bush	Remarks in Halifax, Canada	1	0.06	1	0.06	2	0.11	14	0.78	18
2/24/05	Bush	Remarks in Bratislava	0	0	1	0.17	1	0.17	4	0.67	6
5/7/05	Bush	Remarks in Riga	0	0	0	0	9	0.50	9	0.50	18

Date	President	Title as Given[86]	Countering Perceptions	Countering Perceptions Intensity Index	Undermining Adversarial Leadership	Undermining Adversarial Leadership Intensity Index	Positive Vision Based on America's Values	Positive Vision Based on America's Values Intensity Index	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States Intensity Index	Totals
5/10/05	Bush	Remarks in Freedom Square in Tbilisi	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1.00	4
11/6/05	Bush	Remarks in a Discussion with Young Leaders	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1.00	2
11/16/05	Bush	Remarks in Kyoto	0	0	1	0.07	3	0.21	10	0.71	14
6/8/06	Bush	Remarks on the Death of Senior Al Qaida Associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi	0	0	3	0.75	1	0.25	0	0	4
6/21/06	Bush	Remarks in a Discussion with Foreign Students in Vienna	1	0.25	0	0	1	0.25	2	0.50	4
6/22/06	Bush	Remarks in Budapest	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	1.00	8
7/14/06	Bush	Remarks in a Discussion With Civic Leaders	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1.00	2
11/16/06	Bush	Remarks at the National Singapore University	4	0.15	1	0.04	2	0.07	20	0.74	27
11/28/06	Bush	Remarks at Latvia University	2	0.13	4	0.27	1	0.07	8	0.53	15
3/9/07	Bush	Remarks Prior to a Discussion With Members of the Community in Sao Paulo	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.00	1
1/13/08	Bush	President Bush Discusses Importance of Freedom in the Middle East	1	0.05	4	0.18	5	0.28	12	0.55	22
8/7/08	Bush	President Bush Visits Bangkok, Thailand	0	0	0	0	3	0.15	17	0.85	20

Date	President	Title as Given[86]	Countering Perceptions	Countering Perceptions Intensity Index	Undermining Adversarial Leadership	Undermining Adversarial Leadership Intensity Index	Positive Vision Based on America's Values	Positive Vision Based on America's Values Intensity Index	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States Intensity Index	Totals
9/20/08	Bush	President Bush Condemns Terrorist Attack in Islamabad, Pakistan	0	0	2	0.67	0	0	1	0.33	3
11/28/08	Bush	Statement by the President on Horrific Attacks in Mumbai	0	0	1	1.00	0	0	0	0	1
4/3/09	Obama	Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting	1	0.05	0	0	1	0.05	19	0.90	21
4/5/09	Obama	Remarks in Prague	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	1.00	15
4/7/09	Obama	Remarks in a Discussion With Students	0	0	0	0	1	0.13	7	0.87	8
6/4/09	Obama	Remarks in Cairo	5	0.15	3	0.09	5	0.15	20	0.61	33
7/7/09	Obama	Remarks by the President at the New Economic School Graduation	4	0.15	2	0.07	4	0.15	17	0.63	27
11/16/09	Obama	Remarks by President Barack Obama at Town Hall Meeting with Future Chinese Leaders	2	0.13	0	0	3	0.19	11	0.69	16
11/7/10	Obama	Remarks by the President and the First Lady in Town Hall with Students in Mumbai, India	1	0.09	0	0	0	0	10	0.91	11
11/10/10	Obama	Remarks by the President at the University of Indonesia	1	0.05	2	0.11	1	0.05	15	0.79	19

Date	President	Title as Given[86]	Countering Perceptions	Countering Perceptions Intensity Index	Undermining Adversarial Leadership	Undermining Adversarial Leadership Intensity Index	Positive Vision Based on America's Values	Positive Vision Based on America's Values Intensity Index	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States	Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States Intensity Index	Totals
3/20/11	Obama	Remarks by the President to the People of Brazil	1	0.09	0	0	0	0	10	0.91	11
5/2/11	Obama	Remarks by the President on Osama Bin Laden	1	0.14	4	0.57	2	0.29	0	0	7
5/23/11	Obama	Remarks by the President at Irish Celebration in Dublin, Ireland	0	0	0	0	1	0.11	8	0.89	9
11/4/11	Obama	Remarks by President Obama in Honoring the Alliance Between the United States and France	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1.00	5
3/26/12	Obama	Remarks by President Obama at Hankuk University	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1.00	5
4/15/12	Obama	Remarks by President Obama at a Land Titling Event	0	0	0	0	1	0.33	2	0.67	3
9/12/12	Obama	Remarks by the President on the Deaths of U.S. Embassy Staff in Libya	0	0	0	0	3	0.75	1	0.25	4
11/19/12	Obama	Remarks by President Obama at the University of Yangon	0	0	0	0	11	0.42	15	0.58	26

Table 2. Number of occurrences of codes in speeches and statements, and calculation of the Intensity Index to demonstrate the relative weight given to each code within each speech. This Index is based on a scale of 0 to 1.0, and was calculated by dividing the number of instances of each code by the total number of coded excerpts within the speech.

3. Comparisons of Codes by Presidents

a. Countering Perceptions

The *Countering Perceptions* code was least employed during this analysis. Of the 41 excerpts tagged with this code, 25 were attributed to Bush and 16 to Obama. As illustrated in Figure 4, the 41 excerpts appeared within 20, or 40%, of the total sample of speeches and statements. Bush utilized this type of message in 12, or 35%, of his 34 speeches and statements within the sample; Obama utilized messages aimed to counter perceptions in 8, or 50%, of his 16 sample speeches and statements. Notably, there were no occurrences of the *Countering Perceptions* code in the six most recent Obama speeches within the sample.

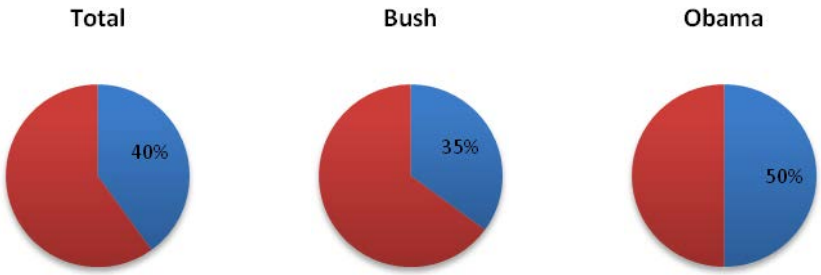

Figure 4. The percentage of speeches and statements that contained at least one occurrence of the *Countering Perceptions* code.

An examination of the *Countering Perceptions* Intensity Index of each speech and statement containing at least one occurrence of this code revealed an overall average rating of approximately 0.13, signifying a low relative weight given to this type of message by both presidents. Bush employed messages of this type on an intermittent basis throughout both of his terms in office, with an average Intensity Index of approximately 0.15. Similarly, the average Intensity Index for the use of *Countering Perceptions* in speeches and statements by Obama was 0.10.

An analysis of the content of the excerpts given the *Countering Perceptions* code revealed that each president utilized this type of message in a different manner. Bush countered perceptions of war and violence brought on by America with

statements about the humanitarian efforts of the United States, as shown by the frequent use of the words “aid” and “assistance” in the word cloud visualization depicted in Figure 5.

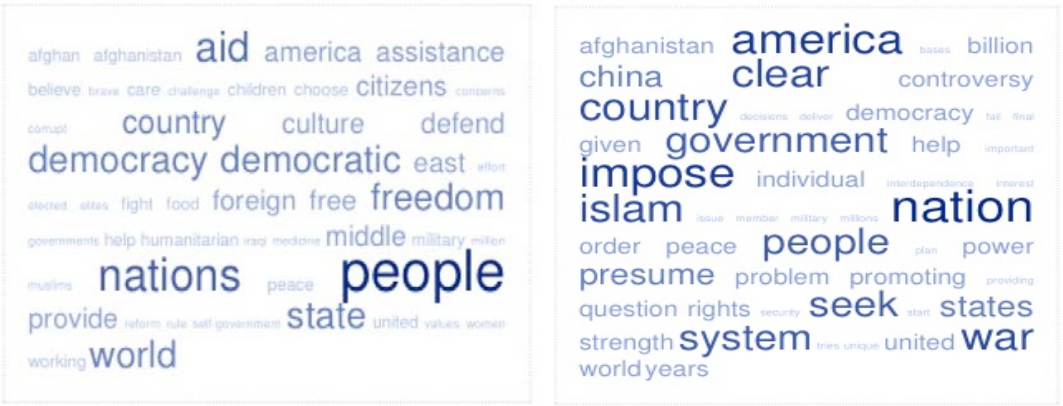

Figure 5. Word clouds providing a visualization of word frequency in excerpts from Bush, left, and Obama, right, which were assigned the *Countering Perceptions* code.

Specifically, 11 of the 20 excerpts from Bush speeches referred to such efforts, such as his statement during his May 2002 speech in Moscow, Russia, in which he said,

> We've got a military we're going to use, if we need to, to defend freedom. But on the other hand, we delivered a lot of medicine and a lot of food. We hurt thinking not only that the children in Afghanistan could not go to school; we cried for the fact that people were starving in the country. We have rebuilt schools. We have also provided medicine and food.[87]

Bush utilized a similar message in Singapore in November 2006, referring to the aid provided by the United States in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami by stating,

> After the tsunami struck in 2004, we quickly dispatched military assistance and humanitarian relief to save lives and help devastated communities rebuild. By coming to the aid of people in dire need,

[87] George W. Bush, “Remarks to Community and Religious Leader in Moscow,” (speech, Moscow, Russia, May 24, 2002), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2002-book1/html/PPP-2002-book1-doc-pg881.htm.

> America showed the good heart of our citizens and the depth of our friendship in this region.[88]

Only one excerpt from an Obama speech cited humanitarian efforts, as he acknowledged in his Cairo speech in June 2009 that "military power alone is not going to solve the problems in Afghanistan and Pakistan," and referenced plans to invest in the infrastructure and economy of Afghanistan and Pakistan.[89]

Many of the other excerpts from Bush speeches tagged with the *Countering Perceptions* code included references to democracy and its place within Muslim cultures, thereby attempting to dispel the notion that democracy is incompatible with Islam. For example, as stated by Bush in November 2003 in London, England,

> We're told that Islam is somehow inconsistent with a democratic culture. Yet more than half of the world's Muslims are today contributing citizens in democratic societies. It is suggested that the poor, in their daily struggles, care little for self-government. Yet the poor especially need the power of democracy to defend themselves against corrupt elites.[90]

Obama takes a more direct approach with messages aimed to counter perceptions. On three occasions, Obama stated that the United States "is not, and never will be, at war with Islam."[91] In ten other excerpts, Obama described the objectives America was not pursuing or similar variations of that theme:

- "We have no interest in occupying Afghanistan."[92]

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88 George W. Bush, "Remarks at the National Singapore University," (speech, Singapore, November 16, 2006), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2006-book2/html/PPP-2006-book2-doc-pg2086.htm.

89 Barack Obama, "Remarks in Cairo," (speech, Cairo, Egypt, June 4, 2009), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2009-book1/xml/PPP-2009-book1-Doc-pg760.xml.

90 George W. Bush, "Remarks at Whitehall Palace," (speech, London, United Kingdom, November 19, 2003), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2003-book2/html/PPP-2003-book2-doc-pg1573-2.htm.

91 Obama, "Remarks in Cairo"; Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the University of Indonesia," (speech, Jakarta, Indonesia, November 10, 2010), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/11/10/remarks-president-university-indonesia-jakarta-indonesia; Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President on Osama Bin Laden," (speech, Washington, DC, May 2, 2011), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/02/remarks-president-osama-bin-laden.

92 Barack Obama, "Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting," (speech, Strasbourg, France, April 3, 2009), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2009-book1/xml/PPP-2009-book1-Doc-pg413.xml.

- "No system of government can or should be imposed by one nation by any other."[93]
- "We seek no bases, nor do we want to control these nations."[94]
- "America cannot and should not seek to impose any system of government on any other country, nor would we presume to choose which party or individual should run a country."[95]
- "In 2009, a great power does not show strength by dominating or demonizing other countries."[96]
- "America will never impose a security arrangement on another country."[97]
- "We do not seek to impose any system of government on any other nation…."[98]
- "And that is why the United States insists we do not seek to contain China's rise."[99]
- "And that is why the United States insists we do not seek to contain China's rise…."[100]
- "And we understand that no one nation should impose its will on another."[101]

Obama's repeated use of the word "impose," as depicted in the word cloud in Figure 5, stood in stark comparison with its use by Bush, as Obama most often utilized it when referring to actions not to be taken by the United States. Bush, on the other hand,

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[93] Obama, "Remarks in Cairo."

[94] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the New Economic School Graduation," (speech, Moscow, Russia, July 7, 2009), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-new-economic-school-graduation.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Barack Obama "Remarks by President Barack Obama at Town Hall Meeting with Future Chinese Leaders," (speech, Shanghai, China, November 16, 2009), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-town-hall-meeting-with-future-chinese-leaders.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President to the People of Brazil," (speech, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, March 20, 2011), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/20/remarks-president-people-brazil-rio-de-janeiro-brazil.

primarily used the same word in reference to the adversary, as will be shown within the *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* code.

b. Undermining Adversarial Leadership

The analysis characterized 43 excerpts with the *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* code throughout 23, or 46%, of the sample speeches and statements. A majority of these excerpts (32) were attributed to Bush and appeared in 19, or 56%, of his speeches and statements; eleven excerpts from Obama were given this code and came from only 4, or 25%, of his speeches and statements (Figure 6). This was the only code utilized on a greater basis by Bush than Obama and, again, there were no occurrences of the *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* code in the six most recent Obama speeches within the sample.

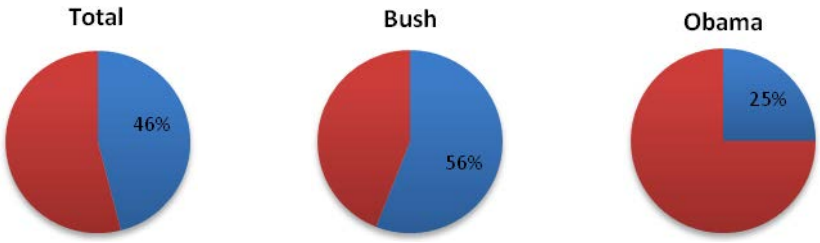

Figure 6. The percentage of speeches and statements that contained at least one occurrence of the *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* code.

The *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* Intensity Index of each speech and statement containing at least one occurrence of this code averaged approximately 0.38. Such excerpts by Bush had a significantly higher average Intensity Index than those by Obama at 0.42 and 0.21, respectively, making *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* the code with the highest relative weight given by Bush.

As part of their messages aimed to undermine adversarial leadership, Bush and Obama used harsher and more direct language than was seen under the other codes. Both presidents described the actions of the adversary as "murder" (as depicted in Figure 7), and they also often described the victims of terrorist attacks as "innocents," or used a

comparable description to portray those targeted by violent extremists as regular people with whom their audience could relate. For example, in his speech on the night of September 11, 2001, Bush referred to the victims of that day's terrorist attacks as "in airplanes or in their offices: secretaries, business men and women, military and Federal workers, moms and dads, friends and neighbors."[102] In a similar message used when referencing the 9/11 attacks during his speech in Cairo in June 2009, Obama stated that, "Al Qaida killed nearly 3,000 people on that day. The victims were innocent men, women, and children from America and many other nations who had done nothing to harm anybody."[103]

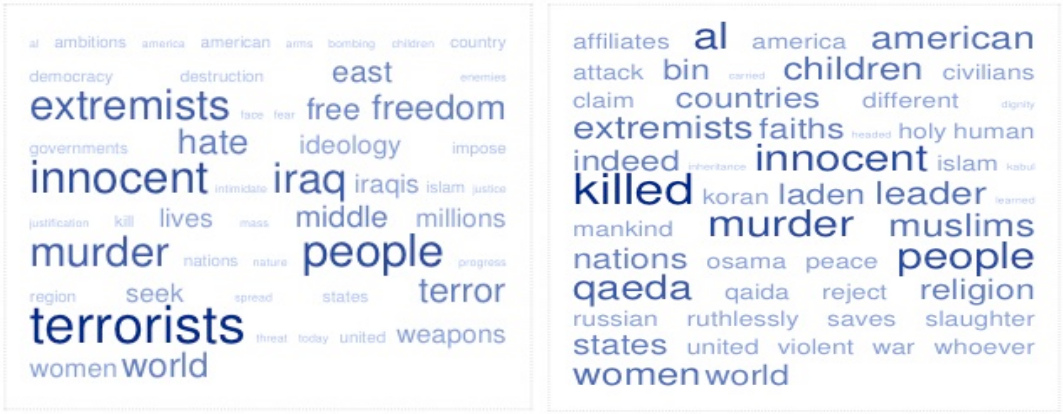

Figure 7. Word clouds providing a visualization of word frequency in excerpts from Bush, left, and Obama, right, which were assigned the *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* code.

In addition, both presidents also pointed out that victims of violent terror were not only American, and often included Muslims. Though these statements also served to establish common bonds with other countries, and therefore could have been coded as *Cultivating Common Interests and Values*, their primary message denigrated the actions of the violent extremists by bringing the damage closer to home for others:

[102] George W. Bush, "Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks," (speech, Washington, DC, September 11, 2001), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2001-book2/html/PPP-2001-book2-doc-pg1099.htm.

[103] Obama, "Remarks in Cairo."

- "On September the 11th, 2001, terrorists left their mark of murder on my country and took the lives of 67 British citizens."[104]
- "On September 11, 2001, al Qaeda murdered nearly 3,000 people on America's home soil. Some of the victims that day were innocent Muslims. And since then, al Qaeda and its allies have killed many more Muslims here in the Middle East -- including women and children."[105]
- "The victims were innocent men, women, and children from America and many other nations who had done nothing to harm anybody."[106]
- "They have killed in many countries. They have killed people of different faiths, but more than any other, they have killed Muslims."[107]
- "For years, al Qaeda and its affiliates have defiled a great religion of peace and justice, and ruthlessly murdered men, women and children of all nationalities and faiths. Indeed, above all, they have murdered Muslims. And these extremists have killed in Amman and Bali; Islamabad and Kabul; and they have the blood of Americans and Russians on their hands."[108]
- "Innocent civilians in America, in Indonesia and across the world are still targeted by violent extremism."[109]
- "Indeed, al Qaeda has slaughtered scores of Muslims in many countries, including our own."[110]

On multiple occasions, Bush also referred to the opposition to freedom by violent extremists. These references included, for example, descriptions of the adversary as "terrorists who despise freedom's progress,"[111] "followers of a clear and focused

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[104] George W. Bush, "Remarks at Whitehall Palace," (speech, London, United Kingdom, November 19, 2003), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2003-book2/html/PPP-2003-book2-doc-pg1573-2.htm.

[105] George W. Bush, "President Bush Discusses Importance of Freedom in the Middle East," (speech, Abu Dhabi, UAE, January 13, 2008), accessed February 9, 2013, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/01/20080113-1.html.

[106] Obama, "Remarks in Cairo."

[107] Ibid.

[108] Obama, "Remarks by the President at the New Economic School Graduation."

[109] Obama, "Remarks by the President at the University of Indonesia."

[110] Obama, "Remarks by the President on Osama Bin Laden."

[111] George W. Bush, "Remarks in Kyoto," (speech, Kyoto, Japan, November 16, 2005), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2005-book2/html/PPP-2005-book2-doc-pg1722.htm.

ideology that hates freedom,"[112] and "using terror to stop the spread of freedom."[113] In comparison, Obama never utilized the word "freedom" in any excerpt under the *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* code.

As mentioned earlier, the presidents used the word "impose" in different contexts. While Obama injected the word in messages aimed to counter perceptions that the United States was forcing its ideals upon other countries, Bush used the same word mainly when referring to the adversary:

- "The world has suffered enough from fanatics who seek to impose their will through fear and murder."[114]
- "Their goal is to overthrow governments and to impose their totalitarian rule on millions."[115]
- "These extremists have hijacked the noble religion of Islam, and seek to impose their totalitarian ideology on millions."[116]
- "In Afghanistan under the Taliban, on Iraq's Anbar Province, they ruled by intimidation and murder. Their goal is to impose that same dark rule across the Middle East."[117]

c. Positive Vision Based on America's Values

The review of the sample selection resulted in 103 total excerpts that were coded as *Positive Vision Based on America's Values*. These excerpts were derived from 33, or 66%, of the speeches and statements. Specifically, this code was assigned to 70 excerpts from 22, or 65%, of Bush speeches and statements and 33 excerpts from 11, or approximately 69%, of Obama speeches and statements. As illustrated in Figure 8, this breakdown constituted the most consistent use of a message by both presidents.

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[112] Bush, "Remarks at the National Singapore University."

[113] George W. Bush, "Remarks at Latvia University," (speech, Riga, Latvia, November 28, 2006), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2006-book2/html/PPP-2006-book2-doc-pg2127.htm.

[114] George W. Bush, "Remarks to the People of Romania," (speech, Bucharest, Romania, November 23, 2002), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2002-book2/html/PPP-2002-book2-doc-pg2119.htm.

[115] Bush, "Remarks at Latvia University."

[116] Bush, "President Bush Discusses Importance of Freedom in the Middle East."

[117] Ibid.

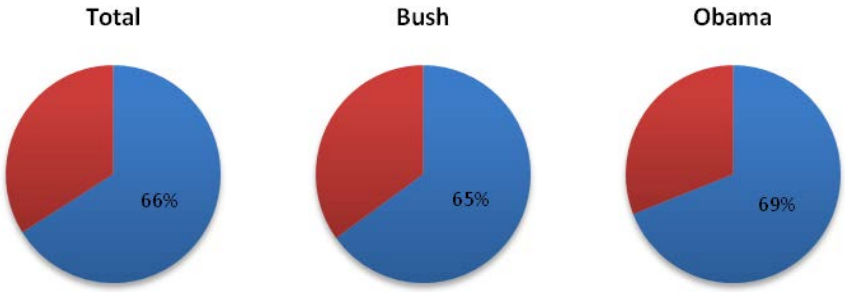

Figure 8. The percentage of speeches and statements that contained at least one occurrence of the *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* code.

The overall average Intensity Index for the *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* code was 0.28, and also was comparable among the presidents. The average Intensity Index for the use of this code in speeches and statements by Bush was 0.30, while Obama's relevant speeches had an average of 0.27.

An examination of the excerpts under the *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* code showed both similarities and differences in the presentation of these messages by each president. The excerpts could be sorted into two primary themes, both used in varying amounts by each president: visionary messages based on democratic ideals, and direct descriptions of the system and people of the United States. While both presidents utilized certain key words such as democracy, liberty, justice, and security to promote thoughts and ideas consistent with America's values, the context and frequency in which the words were used differed. On a much greater basis than Obama, as visualized in Figure 9, Bush often used such words to project a vision that described the benefits that could be experienced once other countries adopted a democratic system. To convey this message, Bush demonstrated the close relationship between these words and concepts; for example, during a speech in Singapore in November 2006, Bush stated, "In the long run, the surest path to security is the expansion of liberty and freedom. History shows that free societies are peaceful societies. Democracies do not attack each other."[118] Bush also put forth statements that demonstrated the resultant effects of democracy, such

[118] Bush, "Remarks at the National Singapore University."

as “Lasting peace is gained as justice and democracy advance,”[119] and “Democracy leads to justice within a nation, and the advance of democracy leads to greater security among nations.”[120] While in Thailand in 2008, Bush best summed up this type of visionary message by stating, “We're also working to counter the hateful ideology of the extremists by promoting a more hopeful alternative, one based upon freedom and liberty.”[121]

advance america believe best better build citizens
country democracy democratic dignity east
free freedom future given government
greater help hope human justice lasting law lead
learned liberty life live middle nations
others peace people power prosperity
region responsibility rights rule security societies stability
states strong terror united women world
worship
america american around citizens
committed constitution country democracy dignity equal
extend faith founding free freedom future god
governments history hold human justice law
nation opportunity peace people person power
president principles prosperous protect race reach rights rule serve
shows stand states stronger truth united values war
women work world worship

Figure 9. Word clouds providing a visualization of word frequency in excerpts from Bush, left, and Obama, right, which were assigned the *Positive Vision Based on America’s Values* code.

Many of the other excerpts under the *Positive Vision Based on America’s Values* code, and the majority of those originating from Obama, used direct references to America. Obama described his reason for this type of message while in Burma in November 2012, stating, “I describe our system in the United States because that's how you must reach for the future that you deserve….”[122] Instead of projecting a conceptual image utilizing words such as democracy, liberty, and justice, these messages utilized

[119] Bush, “Remarks at Whitehall Palace.”

[120] George W. Bush, “Remarks at Galatsaray University,” (speech, Istanbul, Turkey, June 29, 2004), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2004-book1/html/PPP-2004-book1-doc-pg1151.htm.

[121] George W. Bush, “President Bush Visits Bangkok, Thailand,” (speech, Bangkok, Thailand, August 7, 2008), accessed February 9, 2013, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/08/20080807-8.html.

[122] Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama at the University of Yangon,” (speech, Rangoon, Burma, November 19, 2012), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/19/remarks-president-obama-university-yangon.

those same words to describe the system and people of the United States, the freedoms and rights afforded to American citizens, and the ideal of the American dream:

- "Yet there's a reason our Nation shines as a beacon of hope and opportunity, a reason many throughout the world dream of coming to America. It's because we're a free nation, where men and women have the opportunity to achieve their dreams. No matter your background or your circumstance of birth, in America you can get a good education; you can start your own business; you can raise a family; you can worship freely and help elect the leaders of your community and your country. You can support the policies of our Government, or you're free to openly disagree with them."[123]
- "The dream of opportunity for all people has not come true for everyone in America, but its promise exists for all who come to our shores, and that includes nearly 7 million American Muslims in our country today, who, by the way, enjoy incomes and educational levels that are higher than the American average."[124]
- "And I believe that America holds within her the truth that regardless of race, religion, or station in life, all of us share common aspirations to live in peace and security, to get an education and to work with dignity, to love our families, our communities, and our God."[125]
- "But tonight, we are once again reminded that America can do whatever we set our mind to. That is the story of our history, whether it's the pursuit of prosperity for our people, or the struggle for equality for all our citizens; our commitment to stand up for our values abroad, and our sacrifices to make the world a safer place. Let us remember that we can do these things not just because of wealth or power, but because of who we are: one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."[126]
- "In the United States, for more than two centuries, we have worked to keep this promise for all of our citizens—to win freedom for those who were enslaved; to extend the right to vote for women and African Americans; to protect the rights of workers to organize."[127]

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[123] George W. Bush, "Remarks at Tsinghua University in Beijing," (speech, Beijing, China, February 22, 2002), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2002-book1/html/PPP-2002-book1-doc-pg270.htm.

[124] Obama, "Remarks in Cairo."

[125] Ibid.

[126] Obama, "Remarks by the President on Osama Bin Laden."

[127] Obama, "Remarks by President Obama at the University of Yangon."

- "The United States of America is a nation of Christians and Jews, and Muslims and Buddhists, and Hindus and non-believers. Our story is shaped by every language; it's enriched by every culture. We have people from every corners of the world. We've tasted the bitterness of civil war and segregation, but our history shows us that hatred in the human heart can recede; that the lines between races and tribes fade away. And what's left is a simple truth: e pluribus unum -- that's what we say in America. Out of many, we are one nation and we are one people. And that truth has, time and again, made our union stronger. It has made our country stronger. It's part of what has made America great. We amended our Constitution to extend the democratic principles that we hold dear."[128]

d. Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States

The largest amount of excerpts was given the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code, with 333 of the 520 excerpts classified with this code. A total of 43, or 86%, of the 50 sample speeches and statements contained excerpts with this code (Figure 10). Of the 333 excerpts given this code, 173 were attributed to Bush and 160 to Obama. The excerpts from Bush appeared within 28, or approximately 82%, of his 34 sample speeches and statements, while Obama utilized this type of message in 15, or approximately 94%, of his 16 speeches and statements within the sample. The only occasion in which Obama did not employ a *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* message was during his remarks upon the death of Usama Bin Laden.

[128] Obama, "Remarks by President Obama at the University of Yangon."

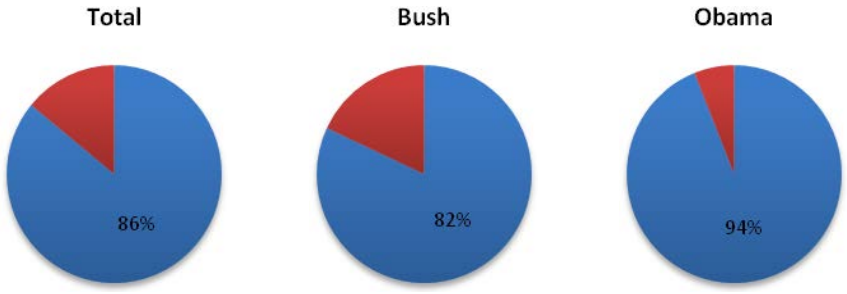

Figure 10. The percentage of speeches and statements that contained at least one occurrence of the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code.

The analysis of the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* Intensity Index of each speech and statement containing at least one occurrence of this code revealed an overall average rating of approximately 0.69, demonstrating the highest relative weight given to a code. Both presidents utilized messages of this type on a consistent and frequent basis throughout their years in office. The average Intensity Index of the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States code* in speeches and statements by Bush was 0.64; for Obama, the average was 0.78.

Excerpts given the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code spanned the greatest number of themes within one code but also proved to contain the most consistent message among the presidents, as both men attempted to establish the commonalities shared by the audience with America. The ideas presented in these excerpts, as visualized in Figure 11, included historical and cultural themes; mutual enemies, threats, and challenges; and the universality of certain values, freedoms, and rights.

alliance america americans asia
believe bring build century challenges china common
country democratic east enemy europe face fighting free
freedom future help hope human important
interests justice korea liberty nations peace
people prosperity region rights
security share society stand states terror
terrorists threat today together trade united
values work world
advance america american around
believe build century commitment
common cooperation countries
differences effort free freedom future help history hope
human indonesia interests live matter
mutual nations nuclear opportunity partners
partnership peace people progress
prosperity respect responsibility rights
security seek share stand
states success today together
united universal values work world

Figure 11. Word clouds providing a visualization of word frequency in excerpts from Bush, left, and Obama, right, which were assigned the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code.

As mentioned earlier, both presidents frequently began speeches with a reference about the host country that often included anecdotes of previous positive interaction and coordination between the host country and the United States. By doing so, they demonstrated an enduring long-term connection between the countries. On some occasions, both presidents also traced the ancestral and cultural roots of American citizens to the host country and noted their contributions to American society; for example, in Beijing, China, in February 2002, Bush noted that the United States is "home to 2.3 million Americans of Chinese ancestry, who can be found working in the offices of our corporations or in the Cabinet of the President of the United States or skating for the American Olympic team."[129] Similarly, in Cairo in June 2009, Obama spoke of the contributions of American Muslims, stating, "They have fought in our wars; they have served in our government; they have stood for civil rights; they have started businesses; they have taught at our universities; they've excelled in our sports arenas; they've won Nobel prizes, built our tallest building, and lit the Olympic torch."[130]

On several occasions, both Bush and Obama highlighted the similar multiethnic cultures of the United States and the country in which they were speaking. Bush made note of this cultural characteristic when speaking in Russia in May 2002 and

[129] Bush, "Remarks at Tsinghua University in Beijing."

[130] Obama, "Remarks in Cairo."

described its significance by stating, “In a multiethnic society, people must work toward tolerance and reject extremism. It's important in America, just like it's important here in Russia. And this is a multiethnic society, to the credit of Russia, just like America is a multiethnic society, which makes our country strong.”[131] Likewise, in Indonesia in November 2010, Obama stated, “We are two nations, which have traveled different paths. Yet our nations show that hundreds of millions who hold different beliefs can be united in freedom under one flag.”[132]

Both presidents sometimes presented a corresponding theme describing the challenges faced by America on its way to becoming a society respectful of the rights of all its citizens. Within these messages, the presidents called attention to the struggles the United States experienced in its history and the similarities with the current challenges of other nations. For example, in Turkey in June 2004, Bush stated, “Achieving these commitments of democracy can require decades of effort and reform. In my own country, it took generations to throw off slavery, racial segregation, and other practices that violated our ideals. So we do not expect that other societies can be transformed in a day.”[133] Likewise, in Latvia in May 2005, Bush stated, “For my own country, the process of becoming a mature, multiethnic democracy was lengthy and violent. Our journey from national independence to justice included the enslavement of millions and a 4-year civil war.”[134] In Brazil in March 2011, Obama put forth a similar message, stating, “On the streets of the United States, men and women marched and bled and some died so that every citizen could enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities—no matter what you looked like, no matter where you came from.”[135] In Ireland in May

[131] Bush, “Remarks to Community and Religious Leader in Moscow.”

[132] Obama, “Remarks by the President at the University of Indonesia.”

[133] Bush, “Remarks at Galatsaray University.”

[134] George W. Bush, “Remarks in Riga,” (speech, Riga, Latvia, May 7, 2005), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2005-book1/html/PPP-2005-book1-doc-pg765.htm.

[135] Obama, “Remarks by the President to the People of Brazil.”

2011, Obama put forth a similar message, stating, "When we strove to blot out the stain of slavery and advance the rights of man, we found common cause with your struggles against oppression."[136]

Within the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code, Bush and Obama also detailed common enemies, threats, and global challenges. Very often, Bush and Obama highlighted violent extremists as a common adversary and also discussed other global threats faced by nations, to include nuclear, economic, and environmental threats:

- "The Soviet Union is gone, but freedom still has enemies. We're threatened by terrorism. Bred within failed states, it's present within our own cities. We're threatened by the spread of chemical and biological and nuclear weapons which are produced by outlaw regimes and could be delivered either by missile or terrorist cell."[137]
- "The greatest threat to peace is the spread of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. And we must work together to stop proliferation."[138]
- "We face terrorist networks that rejoice when parents bury their murdered children or rejoice when bound men plead for mercy. We face outlaw regimes that give aid and shelter to these killers and seek weapons of mass murder. We face the challenges of corruption and poverty and disease, which throw whole nations into chaos and despair."[139]
- "Building more hopeful societies means working together to confront the challenges that face the entire region. Open markets and the entrepreneurial spirit have set off historic economic booms in Asia. This economic growth creates new opportunities, and yet we've got to recognize it creates new challenges. We must find the energy to power our growing economies. We must counter the risk

[136] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at Irish Celebration in Dublin, Ireland," (speech, Dublin, Ireland, May 31, 2011), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/23/remarks-president-irish-celebration-dublin-ireland.

[137] George W. Bush, "Remarks to the Prague Atlantic Student Summit," (speech, Prague, Czech Republic, November 20, 2002), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2002-book2/html/PPP-2002-book2-doc-pg2101.htm.

[138] George W. Bush, "Remarks to the People of Poland," speech, Krakow, Poland, May 31, 2003), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2003-book1/html/PPP-2003-book1-doc-pg574-2.htm.

[139] Bush, "Remarks at Galatsaray University."

of pandemic disease. And we must bring more people into the circle of development and prosperity."[140]

- "Think of the issues that will define your lives: security from nuclear weapons and extremism; access to markets and opportunity; health and the environment; an international system that protects sovereignty and human rights, while promoting stability and prosperity."[141]
- "For whether it's the recession or climate change, or terrorism or drug trafficking, poverty or the proliferation of nuclear weapons, we have learned that without a doubt, there's no quarter of the globe that can wall itself off from the threats of the 21st century."[142]
- "Together, we must confront climate change by ending the world's dependence on fossil fuels, by tapping the power of new sources of energy like the wind and sun, and calling upon all nations to do their part."[143]

On multiple occasions, when speaking to members or prospective members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), both presidents invoked the bond of its members and its ethos of common enemies by citing NATO's Article 5, "An attack on one is an attack on all."[144]

Another consistent message appearing throughout the excerpts under the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code was the universality of freedom and human rights. Both presidents routinely spoke of the collective right of all people to enjoy certain ideals and freedoms, such as the right to practice their chosen religion:

- "We hold dear what our Declaration of Independence says, that all have got unalienable rights, endowed by a Creator--not endowed

[140] Bush, "Remarks at the National Singapore University."

[141] Obama, "Remarks by the President at the New Economic School Graduation."

[142] Obama, "Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting."

[143] Barack Obama, "Remarks in Prague," (speech, Prague, Czech Republic, April 5, 2009), accessed February 13, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2009-book1/xml/PPP-2009-book1-Doc-pg439-2.xml.

[144] Ibid; Obama, "Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting."

by the ones who wrote the Declaration of Independence but by a Creator, a universal Creator."[145]

- We'll be judged by history on how we defend our freedoms. We'll be judged in history by how we help our people prosper and grow. And we'll be judged by history as to whether or not we defend the universal values that are right and just and true."[146]
- "In the 21st century, freedom is an Asian value because it is a universal value."[147]
- "I just want to assure you of one thing, that I believe that freedom is universal. I don't think freedom is just a right for American citizens. I don't think it's just a right for people who practice religion one way. I think it is the right of everybody who lives everywhere."[148]
- "The desire for liberty is universal, because it is written by our Creator into the hearts of every man, woman, and child on this Earth."[149]
- "I assured them that the United States of America cares about the form of government in Russia, that we believe in the universal values embedded in democracy. We believe in rule of law; we believe in human rights; we believe everybody has a right to be treated equally."[150]
- "We recognize that every democracy will reflect the unique culture and history of its people. Yet we recognize that there are universal freedoms, that there are God-given rights for every man, woman, and child on the face of this Earth."[151]
- "First, because, for all our differences, there are certain values that bind us together and reveal our common humanity: the universal

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[145] Bush, "Remarks to Community and Religious Leader in Moscow."

[146] Ibid.

[147] Bush, "Remarks in Kyoto."

[148] George W. Bush, "Remarks in a Discussion with Foreign Students in Vienna," (speech, Vienna, Austria, June 21, 2006), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2006-book1/html/PPP-2006-book1-doc-pg1195.htm.

[149] George W. Bush, "Remarks in Budapest," (speech, Vienna, Austria, June 22, 2006), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2006-book1/html/PPP-2006-book1-doc-pg1203.htm.

[150] George W. Bush, "Remarks in a Discussion With Civic Leaders," (speech, St. Petersburg, Russia, July 14, 2006), accessed February 9, 2013, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2006-book2/html/PPP-2006-book2-doc-pg1393.htm.

[151] Bush, "Remarks at the National Singapore University."

longing to live a life free from fear and free from want, a life marked by dignity and respect and simple justice."[152]

- "But it is our commitment to certain universal values which allows us to correct our imperfections, to improve constantly, and to grow stronger over time."[153]
- "That's why America seeks an international system that lets nations pursue their interests peacefully, especially when those interests diverge; a system where the universal rights of human beings are respected, and violations of those rights are opposed; a system where we hold ourselves to the same standards that we apply to other nations, with clear rights and responsibilities for all."[154]
- "These freedoms of expression and worship—of access to information and political participation—we believe are universal rights. They should be available to all people, including ethnic and religious minorities—whether they are in the United States, China, or any nation."[155]
- "Hand in hand, that is what development and democracy are about—the notion that certain values are universal. Prosperity without freedom is just another form of poverty. Because there are aspirations that human beings share—the liberty of knowing that your leader is accountable to you, and that you won't be locked up for disagreeing with them; the opportunity to get an education and to be able to work with dignity; the freedom to practice your faith without fear or restriction. Those are universal values that must be observed everywhere."[156]
- "But we also know that there's certain aspirations shared by every human being: We all seek to be free. We all seek to be heard. We all yearn to live without fear or discrimination. We all yearn to choose how we are governed. And we all want to shape our own destiny. These are not American ideals or Brazilian ideals. These are not Western ideals. These are universal rights, and we must support them everywhere."[157]

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[152] Obama, "Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting."

[153] Obama, "Remarks by the President at the New Economic School Graduation."

[154] Ibid.

[155] Obama, "Remarks by President Barack Obama at Town Hall Meeting with Future Chinese Leaders."

[156] Obama, "Remarks by the President at the University of Indonesia."

[157] Obama, "Remarks by the President to the People of Brazil."

- "But what we've learned in the United States is that there are certain principles that are universal, apply to everybody no matter what you look like, no matter where you come from, no matter what religion you practice."[158]

4. Comparison of Codes by Types of Remarks

The usage of codes and their corresponding Intensity Indexes can also be analyzed based on the type of remarks in which the messages appeared. As illustrated in Table 3, the frequency and relative weight of codes varied between the two types of remarks. The Countering Perceptions code appeared on a much greater basis within speeches (49%) than in statements in response to a significant national security event, such as a terrorist attack involving American citizens or interests or the death of an adversary (9%); however, both types of remarks gave messages within this code a low relative weight with average Intensity Indexes of 0.13 and 0.14, respectively.

		Speeches	**Statements in Response to National Security Event**
Countering Perceptions	Percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of code	49%	9%
	Average Intensity Index	0.13	0.14
Undermining Adversarial Leadership	Percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of code	33%	90%
	Average Intensity Index	0.14	0.70
Positive Vision Based on America's Values	Percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of code	69%	55%
	Average Intensity Index	0.23	0.47
Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States	Percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of code	100%	36%
	Average Intensity Index	0.73	0.24

Table 3. Breakdown of codes appearing in each type of remarks, including the percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of the code and the average Intensity Index for each code.

[158] Obama, "Remarks by President Obama at the University of Yangon."

The primary message of planned speeches in front of a foreign audience was based on *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States*, with 100% of the speeches including at least one excerpt under this code. The corresponding average Intensity Index for the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code within these speeches was the highest of any code at 0.73.

Only 36% of statements made by the presidents in response to a significant national security event, such as a terrorist attack involving American citizens or interests or the death of an adversary, contained at least one excerpt with the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code. Instead, these remarks focused on messages aimed to undermine the adversary. Such statements exhibited both a high frequency (90%) and relative weight (0.70) of the *Undermining Adversarial Leadership* code.

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III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful. It is as simple as that.
>
> Edward R. Murrow[159]

The examination of the 50 selected speeches and statements revealed numerous common themes throughout the messages presented by both presidents over the course of the last decade. Though each president also discussed various topics that fell outside of the areas addressed by this research, the defined categories of coding utilized for this analysis amply captured the messages put forth by the presidents in support of U.S. counterterrorism efforts and therefore allow for answers to the research questions posed in this thesis.

A. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE MESSAGE DELIVERED BY U.S. PRESIDENTS TO FOREIGN AUDIENCES SINCE THE 9/11 TERRORIST ATTACKS?

Based on the review of speeches and statements as well as the analysis of the frequency and relative weight afforded to each code, the research determined the message delivered by the presidents to foreign audiences since the 9/11 terrorist attacks to be of a primarily narrative nature. As shown in Figure 12, less than half of all speeches and statements contained excerpts of a counter narrative nature (either *Countering Perceptions* or *Undermining Adversarial Leadership*); rather, the majority of the remarks included at least one occurrence of a narrative message with 86% containing excerpts with the *Common Interests and Values with the United States* code and 66% containing excerpts with the *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* code. Within the speeches and statements containing these codes, the excerpts with the *Common Interests and*

[159] Edward R. Murrow as quoted in U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Background and the 9/11 Commission Recommendations*, by Susan Epstein, CRS Report RL32607 (June 1, 2010), accessed October 21, 2012, http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/40146.pdf.

Values with the United States code were given a greater relative weight (0.69) compared to those with the *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* code (0.28).

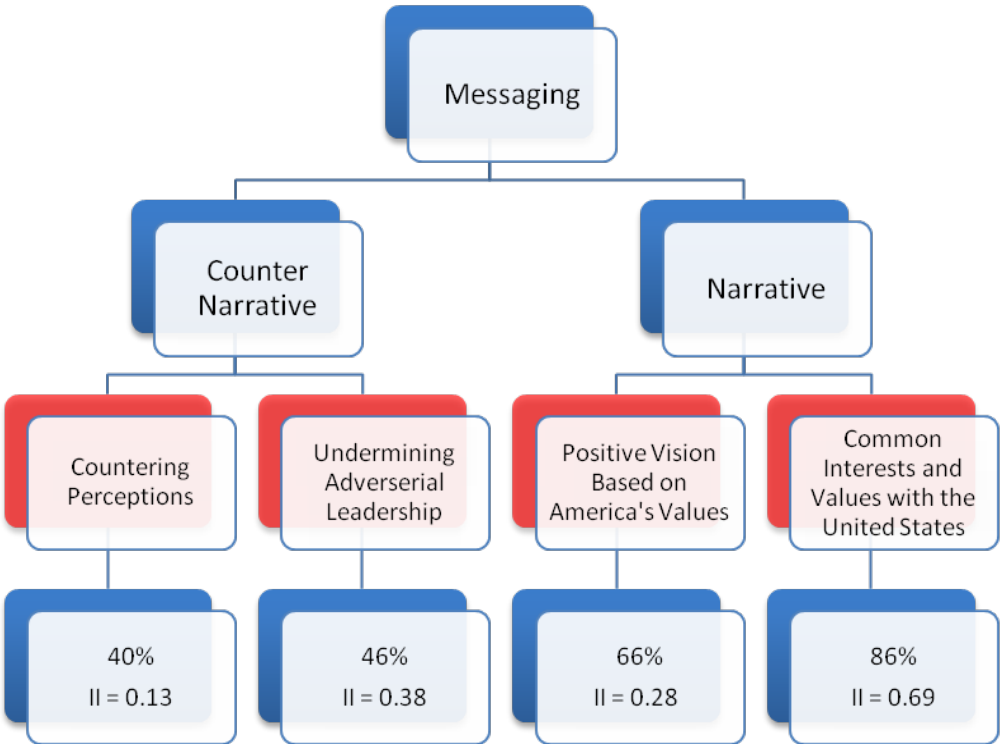

Figure 12. Categories of codes used for analysis, the percentage of speeches/statements containing each code, and the average Intensity Index (II) of each code.

Though only 46% of all speeches and statements contained messages of *Undermining Adversarial Leadership*, this code held a relative high weight with an average Intensity Index of 0.38. As seen in the comparison of codes by type of remarks, however, this greater weight can be attributed to the much higher use of this code within statements made by the presidents in response to a national security event.

B. HAS THE NATURE OF THIS MESSAGE DIFFERED BETWEEN PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATIONS?

Overall, the message delivered to foreign audiences by Bush and Obama was relatively consistent. The message utilized with the greatest frequency and given the greatest relative weight by both presidents were those under the *Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States* code, as illustrated in Table 4, although

Obama employed this type of message more than Bush. Both presidents employed messages of *Countering Perceptions* and *Positive Vision Based on America's Values* on a comparable basis and with a similar relative weight.

		Bush	Obama
Countering Perceptions	Percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of code	35%	40%
	Average Intensity Index	0.15	0.10
Undermining Adversarial Leadership	Percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of code	56%	25%
	Average Intensity Index	0.42	0.21
Positive Vision Based on America's Values	Percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of code	65%	69%
	Average Intensity Index	0.30	0.27
Cultivating Common Interests and Values with the United States	Percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of code	82%	94%
	Average Intensity Index	0.64	0.78

Table 4. Breakdown of codes by president, including the percentage of speeches/statements with at least one occurrence of the code and the average Intensity Index for each code.

The primary difference between the administrations was in regard to the code of Undermining Adversarial Leadership. This type of message was the only code used with greater frequency and given a higher relative weight by Bush than Obama.

C. CAN THIS MESSAGE BE MODIFIED TO BETTER SUPPORT U.S. EFFORTS TO COMBAT VIOLENT ISLAMIC EXTREMISM, AND IF SO, HOW?

This research demonstrated that the United States puts forth messages of its own narrative with higher frequency and relative weight than messages of a counter narrative nature. The United States should continue its efforts to present its own narrative; however, to achieve a more effective holistic approach to public diplomacy and strategic communication, it should also take greater advantage of opportunities to increase its use

of counter narrative messages that contest perceptions and undermine the adversary. While the presidents have utilized such messages in their responses to national security events, the counter narrative can be employed on more occasions. The value of such messages is supported by previous studies of individuals who have left terrorist organizations.[160] These studies have provided a greater understanding of the de-radicalization process, or the process through which individuals depart from violent Islamic extremist organizations and denounce their associated beliefs. The motivations involved in the start of this process were found to include disillusionment with the organization's tactics and strategies, loss of respect for the group's leadership, and the occurrence of a traumatic event that preceded the decision to reject violence (this experience may not only be defined as a personal physical injury but as emotional or mental distress as well).[161] Any of these precipitating beliefs or events can trigger a cognitive opening through which new and different ideas are received. The United States can foster these motivations, and exploit potential resulting cognitive openings, by promoting messages of a counter narrative nature.

The United States also can take additional steps to strengthen its counterterrorism efforts through strategic communication. Building on previous public diplomacy strategies that stressed the need to empower moderate Muslim voices but did not explain the full meaning or intent of this empowerment, the U.S. government should gain the insight of these partners to craft messages that will have the greatest impact on other cultures. For example, the 2007 U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication advised government officials to "avoid using religious language, because it can mean different things and is easily misconstrued;"[162] however, the absence of religious language could also be dangerously misconstrued by creating the

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[160] Michael Jacobson, "Learning Counter-Narrative Lessons," 75.

[161] Michael Jacobson, "Why Terrorists Quit: Gaining from Al-Qa'ida's Losses," *CTC Sentinel* 1, no. 8 (July 2008), accessed October 24, 2009, http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/why-terrorist-quit-gaining-from-al-qaida%E2%80%99s-losses; Noricks, Darcy M.E., "Disengagement and Deradicalization: Processes and Programs," in *Social Science for Counterterrorism: Putting the Pieces Together*, ed. Paul K. Davis and Kim Cragin, 299-322 (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, 2009).

[162] U.S. Department of State, *U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*.

impression that Americans lack faith.[163] Coordination throughout the public diplomacy process by the U.S. government with individuals who have expertise in Muslim and Arab culture could draw attention to such perceptions as well as avoid the use of potentially damaging language.

In addition, the U.S. government should also encourage similar messaging from counterparts in other countries, in order to present a united voice to effectively combat the ideology of violent Islamic extremists. Strong international partnerships can help to reinforce valuable themes, thereby increasing global assistance in counterterrorism efforts and decreasing the appeal of the violent Islamic extremist narrative.

[163] Reilly, "Ideas Matter," 20.

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IV. CONCLUSION

> If the United States does not act aggressively to define itself in the Islamic world, the extremists will gladly do the job for us.
>
> 9/11 Commission Report[164]

A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The use of public diplomacy is an essential component of counterterrorism efforts but, to date, the United States has not been as effective in its attempts to utilize strategic communication against the threat of violent Islamic extremism as it has been in its utilization of military, intelligence, and law enforcement resources. Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, public diplomacy policies and proposals of the U.S. government have been criticized, found to be ineffective, and been the subject of continuous overhaul.[165]

Based upon the idea that a retrospective analysis of previous presidential speeches could provide guidance for future strategic communications of U.S. government officials, this thesis identified the nature of the message delivered by U.S. Presidents to foreign audiences since the 9/11 attacks through an analysis of a purposeful sampling of 50 speeches and statements. The analysis examined the position of the United States Government in the ideological debate with violent Islamic extremists to determine whether the United States has taken a largely defensive stance, in which the United States constantly strives to counter the narrative of violent extremist adversaries, or a more forward-leaning posture, in which the United States remains primarily concerned with presenting its own narrative based on its values and ideals.

If asked to provide a hypothesis prior to embarking upon this research, this writer would have stated that the United States needed to focus more on messaging its own beliefs and values rather than responding to the narrative of the violent extremists. As evidenced by this analysis, however, the United States has in fact been promoting its own

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[164] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 377.

[165] Paul, "Whither Strategic Communication?" iii.

message. A majority of remarks by the presidents were found to include at least one occurrence of a narrative message, either projecting a positive vision based on America's values or establishing common interests and values with other countries. The presidents utilized a counter narrative message, aimed to counter perceptions or undermine the adversary, with less frequency.

The recommendations based on the results of this analysis therefore endorse greater use of counter narrative themes that directly confront the ideology of violent Islamic extremists. Employing such messages would provide the United States with a more comprehensive strategy, corresponding with the three-pronged hybrid approach advocated in the 2007 U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication which consists of messages that offer a positive vision of hope and opportunity, rooted in America's most basic values; isolate and undermine violent extremists; and cultivate common interests and values between Americans and people throughout the world.[166]

In addition to the recommendation to modify this message by more consistently including messages aimed at countering perceptions and undermining the adversary, the United States can take additional steps to strengthen its public diplomacy strategy through greater coordination with Muslim partners as well as with other governments.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The research conducted in furtherance of this thesis leads to other possible avenues of interest for future research opportunities. First, though this research did not uncover any apparent geographic trends in messaging, additional examination is warranted to determine whether any patterns or differences exist among geographic regions in which the message is delivered. Additional research and analysis, based on the same factors evaluated in this thesis, of the public communications of other senior U.S. officials would also be valuable in determining the consistency of the message being delivered throughout the government. Lastly, an analysis of foreign media coverage of

[166] U.S. Department of State, *U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication*.

international speeches and statements by the president and other U.S. government officials would provide a valuable view of the perception and local impact of the remarks.

C. CONCLUSION

The ultimate adversary of the United States in the counterterrorism arena is not the individual who carries out attacks against America; instead, it is the radical violent ideology that compels such action.[167] Absent a strong strategic communication plan within its national security strategy, the United States will lose the ideological battle against violent Islamic extremists. The United States must remain an active participant in this debate, and must commit to a persuasive and consistent message to challenge and defeat this ideology.

As stated by the 9/11 Commission, the United States must aggressively define itself; if not, the extremists will seize the opportunity to do so and will provide their own characterization of America. This thesis has shown that the United States is indeed defining itself through its own narrative based on its values and commonalities with other countries; however, now it must also directly counter the violent extremist ideology. Now is the time for us to define the adversary as well as we define ourselves.

[167] Cilluffo, Carpenter, and Levitt, "What's the Big Idea?" 4.

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